

FOSTER'S PIRATE BRIDGE

THE LATEST DEVELOPMENT OF
AUCTION BRIDGE

R. F. FOSTER





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PIRATE BRIDGE

✓ FOSTER'S
PIRATE BRIDGE ✓

THE LATEST DEVELOPMENT OF
AUCTION BRIDGE

✓ WITH THE FULL CODE OF THE
OFFICIAL LAWS

BY
R. F. FOSTER ✓

Author of "Foster's Complete Bridge," "Auction Bridge for
All," "The Complete Hoyle"; Inventor of the Eleven
Rule and the Self-Playing Cards

NEW YORK
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Dedicated
TO
FRANK CROWNINSHIELD
WHOSE ENTERPRISE AND ENTHUSIASM BROUGHT
THE GAME INTO THE WORLD AND
WHO CHRISTENED IT
"PIRATE"



PREFACE

The following pages are intended to set before the reader a complete description and exposition of the latest candidate for public favor in the realm of cards, without assuming on the reader's part any previous knowledge of similar games, although it is naturally expected that the largest appeal will be to those who are already familiar with auction bridge.

The author has endeavored to explain the logic of the bidding as clearly as possible, illustrating the more interesting situations by hands from actual play. The system herein explained is not, of course, final, as time and experience will undoubtedly suggest many improvements and refinements as the game passes through the purifying process of expert play.

Any hints, suggestions, or criticisms from those who try out the new game with players of varying abilities, will be greatly appreciated by the author.

R. F. FOSTER.

532 MONROE ST.,
BROOKLYN, N. Y.

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PIRATE BRIDGE

HISTORICAL

THE first place in the aristocracy of card games has now been in undisputed possession of some member of the whist family for more than two hundred years. This family embraces all the games that are played with the full pack of fifty-two cards, one suit being the trump, and the score being counted by tricks and honors.

The progenitor of the family seems to have been a game called ruff-and-honors, which was played with only twelve cards of each suit. About 1680 we find that swabbers had taken the place of the earlier game, and shortly afterward the deuces were restored to the pack, and whist was born.

Whist was introduced to the world in 1674, by Charles Cotton, in his *Compleat Gamester*, and enlarged upon in *The Court Gamester*, by Richard Seymour, in 1719, after which came Edmund Hoyle, with his famous treatise on *Short Whist*, in 1742.

From that time until the invention of duplicate whist, in 1890, the old-fashioned rubber was the

king of card games. In the United States, duplicate held its place in public favor until about 1897, when it began to wane after the publication of the laws of bridge by The Whist Club of New York.

Just where bridge originated has never been clearly settled. It seems to be a combination of several other games, notably gerasch, siberia, and preference, and a game closely resembling bridge has been popular in Holland for many years. The name was originally "biritch" supposed to be Russian, but there is no such word in Russian that has any meaning. As biritch came to us from the East, and is said to have been popular in Constantinople, Smyrna, and Southeastern Europe long before English-speaking people heard of it, the name may be a corruption.

Bridge was brought to the United States by H. I. Barbey, in 1893, and was first explained to the members of what is now The Whist Club of New York. For a long time it did not attract any attention from card players at large, but by 1897 the publication of the first code of official laws clarified it, and in a remarkably short space of time it had entirely superseded duplicate whist.

For nearly fifteen years bridge held the center of the stage, when one day John Doe returned from a hill station in India with an idea that the game would be improved if the dealer had not

such a monopoly of the makes, his plan being to let each player in turn state what he thought should be the trump, putting the privilege of playing the dummy up at auction.

Auction bridge introduced the first great change in the manner of scoring, as it restricted the possibility of winning the game to the side that made the highest bid. The opponents could score penalties, but they could never win a rubber unless they got the dummy.

During these changes from whist to bridge and bridge to auction as it is played to-day, a number of changes were made in the rank and value of the suits, points being added for winning rubbers and slams, and penalties for irregularities in play were paid for in points. The laws are, unfortunately, the only part of the game that has not been thoroughly overhauled, and the code now in use in the principal card clubs in the country is simply a patched up reproduction of the one first issued by the Portland Club, in London, away back in 1851, for the game of whist, and published by "Cælebs."

Even after all these changes in the game, each of which has been hailed as the perfect game of cards, good judges have been well aware that auction was far from perfect as a scientific game or an intellectual pastime, although each was an undoubted improvement on its predecessor. No

bridge player would go back to whist, neither would any auction player return to bridge; but auction, even in its most highly developed state, has many serious defects.

It remained for Aleister Crowley, an English writer and traveler, who, like John Doe, had spent much time in India, to go a step further than Doe. The idea of auction bridge was to distribute the privilege of making the trump, giving every one at the table a chance. Crowley's idea was to distribute the privilege of picking the partner who could best support that trump, or who could offer the best defense against it. Instead of having all partnerships decided by their accidental position at the table, his plan was to have the partners select each other by a sort of proposal and acceptance according to the suitability of their joint hands.

He laid the matter before Frank Crowninshield, the editor of *Vanity Fair*, in New York, who at once saw its possibilities, christened it "pirate bridge," and undertook to introduce it to the world through a series of articles beginning in the January number, 1917, after the game had been worked over, rounded out, and polished up by the experience gained during the course of several experimental rubbers, all of which were private, and formed the foundation for the laws.

Pirate bridge was first brought to the attention

of some members of the Knickerbocker Whist Club in New York, on November 3, 1916. Those who took part in the first public rubber of pirate bridge ever played were; E. T. McLaughlin, C. W. Burkhart, G. M. Scott, E. T. Baker, and the writer, Messrs. Crowley and Crowninshield being interested spectators. A few days later four ladies, members of various card clubs, played six rubbers in two hours, Mrs. F. A. Irish, Mrs. T. M. Clarke, Mrs. C. W. Stewart, and Mrs. R. F. Foster.

During the weeks that followed, the game was tried out in various companies, with all classes of players, both men and women and everywhere met with an enthusiastic reception. Informal talks were given at the leading clubs, and many useful points were picked up, thanks to the suggestions and advice of a number of experts at auction who took an immediate interest in the new game.

INTRODUCTION TO THE GAME

It seems to be the natural tendency of all card games to improve, to be modified by time and riper experience, to slough off the parts that militate against their popularity, and to take on features that make them attractive to a wider circle of players.

There is only one game that no one has been able to improve, a game that seems to have come perfect from the hands of its creator, and that is cribbage. In spite of the fact that some member of the whist family has always been the most popular game in the English-speaking world, the changes in the transition from the original game of "single-double-and-the-rub" to the present game of auction have been more numerous and more radical than in any other game upon the cards.

Whist had the defect that the trump was determined by pure chance, and that many of the strongest hands were wasted because the trump that was turned up did not suit them. Bridge remedied that defect by allowing the dealer to

select the trump, and permitting his adversaries to double the value of the tricks if they thought the selection a bad one.

But bridge had the defect that the dealer and his partner had a monopoly of the business of selecting the trump, and while the game was undoubtedly an improvement upon whist in that respect, it did not go far enough, because no matter how good the hands held by the dealer's opponents, they had nothing to say about naming a trump that would suit them.

Auction bridge corrected this fault by allowing each player at the table an opportunity to pick the trump, and letting the highest bidder try it. But auction in turn had a number of defects, some of which were remedied by bringing the suit values closer together, allowing the dealer to pass without a bid, until card players came to think they were at last in possession of a perfect game.

But unprejudiced players were keenly alive to the fact that auction had at least half a dozen more or less serious defects. The most obvious of these was the frequency of misfit hands; another was the impossibility of getting away from a rash or uncongenial partner. Still another was the repeated losses in penalties through the defeat of perfectly legitimate bids, a disaster which the partner was often helpless to warn

against or prevent, even if he saw it coming. This led to another objection, the long drawn out rubbers, in which each side penalizes the other indefinitely, only to find the difference in the scores at the end of the rubber almost negligible.

The possibility of these long rubbers made two serious objections to the game. Those who wished to play but had not much time at their disposal were afraid of missing their train or dinner, while those who were not pressed for time might have to wait nearly two hours for a rubber to be finished before they could cut in.

Another objection to auction is the utter helplessness of the poor card-holder. There is nothing he can bid himself; there is nothing he can do to help his partner and the only course is to sit still and take his medicine, losing rubber after rubber, or quit the game.

Another objection to auction, not obvious to the average player perhaps, is that it is not a good gambling game, because no one can win without sharing all his good fortune with another person. There is no chance for the display of individual skill, apart from the assistance or handicap of the player who happens to be sitting opposite. Gains and glory are alike divided. It is always "we" that won the rubber; never "I."

Pirate bridge entirely removes every one of these objections, without bringing in others to

take their place. There is no longer any excuse for misfit hands, unless the selection is deliberate. The best spade declaration gets the hand best fitted to support it against the best heart or no-trump declaration, and the hand best fitted to support that contract.

The person sitting opposite you is not your partner on that account. There need no longer be any shrinking from cutting into a rubber with the worst player in the club. You need never accept him for a partner unless you are sure he will suit you, and if he accepts you when you do not want him, you can usually get rid of him by accepting some one else yourself.

The bidding in pirate bridge being largely informative, there is no excuse for undertaking a contract that is bound to fail, except with the deliberate intention of taking a penalty to save a game or rubber, neither of which is of sufficient value to justify such a risk. In practice, it has been found that penalties are comparatively rare in pirate bridge, whereas the statistics of auction seem to show that eight contracts fail for every eighteen that succeed. This fact alone would seem to indicate that the system upon which such contracts are based must be fundamentally defective.

Owing to the continual combination of the hands best fitted to carry out a contract on a named suit,

a large number go game on the deal, and slams are very common. This quickness of play more than makes up for any slowness in the bidding, as compared to auction. Very few rubbers go to five deals, and the average seems to be about three-and-a-half, among good players. Six rubbers in two hours is not at all uncommon. Too many deals to a rubber is a sure sign of inexperience, or bad accepting.

As a gambling proposition, for those who like a little excitement, pirate bridge is infinitely superior to auction. Each is for himself and plays his own hand. If he wins, he wins from all three of the others. If he loses, he usually has no one to blame but himself unless he holds shocking cards, because even the poorest hands have a chance if they use good judgment in picking up the right partner at the right time.

With regard to the average value of the rubber, as compared to auction, which is always an interesting point to those who play for stakes, the detailed score of eight consecutive rubbers will be found in the chapter on "Scoring." Statistics have shown that the average rubber at auction is close to 400 points, which two players lose and two win. The average at pirate bridge will run between 500 and 600, so far as can be judged from the figures at hand for so young a game. This would suggest that if the stake one is accus-

tomed to is penny points, they should be cut in half until the game becomes more familiar, as beginners are apt to make expensive mistakes in any game.

The average number of deals in auction is a fraction over 5 to the rubber. In pirate bridge it is a fraction over 3, the difference being due to the large number of hands that go game and the scarcity of contracts that are set.

Perhaps the most attractive feature of the new game to many persons will be the complete elimination of any disputes about those conventional bids upon which writers on the game have never been able to agree, such as taking out no-trumpers, or warning the partner against suit declarations.

The occasion for either of these cannot arise in pirate bridge. If you think a suit bid will not find the proper support in your cards, do not accept it. If you think you are too weak to be of any help to a no-trumper, there is no necessity to shoulder a heavier contract, because all you have to do is to refuse to play the hand at no-trumps with the player that makes the bid.

Another point in auction is the continual fault-finding by those who consider that an increased bid is not justified if the partner has refused to assist the original bid. In pirate, if the partner who has accepted the first bid does not think the advance is justified, all he has to do is to refuse to accept it.

An entirely new feature, adding greatly to the variety and interest of the play, is the continual change in the position of the dummy with regard to the declarer, it being sometimes opposite him, as at auction, sometimes immediately on his right or left. The opportunities this gives for taking advantage of certain combinations that can be led up to; avoiding those that should not be led through, and placing the adversaries between the upper and nether millstone of the strong suits, are not only endless but almost infinite.

DESCRIPTION OF THE GAME

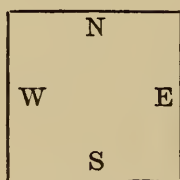
Pirate bridge is played with two full packs of fifty-two cards, which should be of different colors. The cards rank from the A K Q down to the deuce in play, but in cutting the ace is low. The four suits outrank one another in the order of clubs, which is the lowest, then diamonds, hearts, and spades. No-trumps outranks any suit.

THE PLAYERS

The game is played by four persons, each for himself, with no permanent partnerships. If there are more than four candidates for play, those who shall play the first rubber are decided by cutting, the table being complete with six candidates. The pack is usually spread, face downward, and all draw from it. The four cards at each end must not be drawn. If equal cards are drawn, the spade has the preference, then the heart, then the diamond. If more than one card is drawn by any player, the highest is his cut.

The four active players who are to take part in the rubber draw for seats, choice of packs, and

the first deal. If a player exposes more than one card, he must cut again. The lowest cut chooses his seat and cards and deals the first hand. The next lowest sits on his left and so on. For convenience in describing the positions of the players, their seats are designated by the points of the compass, thus:



THE DEAL

The pack having been properly shuffled and presented to the player on the right to be cut, at least four cards being left in each packet, the dealer distributes the cards one at a time from left to right, until each has thirteen. No trump is turned.

No matter what happens, the dealer cannot lose his deal except in the event of no one making an acceptable bid, which is almost impossible. All irregularities in the deal will be found covered by the official laws of the game, which are given at the end of this volume.

The player sitting opposite the dealer shuffles the still pack and places it on his right, to the

left of the next dealer. The deal passes to the left, its position being marked by the still pack.

OBJECT OF THE GAME

The object of the game is to win points. If a stake is played for, the value of these points must be settled beforehand. Playing penny points, the average value of a rubber will be somewhere between five and six dollars.

These points are divided into two classes; those made by tricks, in which the value is decided by the trump declared, and those made by holding honors in the trump suit, by bonuses for winning games, or slams, or by getting penalties.

The chief aim of the players is to secure the naming of the trump that suits their hand, and they bid against one another for the privilege of playing with a certain suit for trumps, or no-trumps, and also to secure a certain player for a partner. One bids a suit; another "accepts" him. The highest accepted bid is called the "contract" and the individual player who made the bid is called the "declarer," his acceptor being his dummy, without changing seats. If the declarer succeeds in carrying out his contract, he scores toward game according to the value of the tricks in the suit he names. His acceptor scores everything above the line.

The first six tricks the declarer wins do not count, as they constitute his "book"; but all he wins over the book count toward game. They are called "odd tricks," or "by cards."

The object of those opposed to the declarer and his acceptor is to save the game, or to defeat the contract, by preventing him from winning the necessary tricks. With this in view, they may have continued their bidding so as to lead him to overbid his hand.

THE TRICK VALUES

The value of the tricks taken by the declarer varies with the suit named as the trump. The value of those taken by the opponents over their book, which is the difference between the contract and seven, never varies with the declaration, the penalty for the failure of the contract being the same with any trump, or at no-trumps.

When clubs are trumps, each trick over the declarer's book is worth 6 points, so that it would take five by cards to win the game in one deal. In diamonds it is 7, in hearts 8, in spades 9, and in no-trumps 10. No-trump is the only declaration that can go game with three by cards in one deal.

HONOR SCORES

Players will sometimes risk bidding more than the hand is worth in tricks on account of their

holding certain valuable scoring combinations in the highest trumps, which are called honors. These do not count toward winning any games, but they influence the ultimate value of the rubber.

The honors are the A K Q J 10 of the trump suit, if there is a trump, or the four aces if there is no trump. They are always scored "above the line," as will be explained when we come to the method of scoring the game.

If two partners hold three honors in trumps between them, called "simple honors," their value is equal to two tricks. This would be 16 in honors if hearts were trumps. If they hold four between them, their value is four tricks, or 36 if spades were trumps. Five honors between partners are worth five tricks.

If there are four or five honors in one hand, they are worth double, so that four honors in clubs would be worth 48. Five in one hand in hearts would be worth 80. Four in one hand and the fifth in the partner's are worth nine tricks, or 81, if spades were trumps.

When there is no-trump, three aces between partners are worth 30 in honors; four aces 40; but four in one hand are worth 100. If the aces are split, neither side scores them. This is called "aces easy."

Both partners score all honors held by either or both.

SLAMS AND BONUSES

If either side wins the whole thirteen tricks, it is a grand slam, and scores 100 in honors for each of the partners. If twelve tricks are won by the same partners it is a little slam, and worth 50 in honors to each of them.

When a player wins a game, by reaching or passing 30 points below the line, made by tricks alone, he adds 50 in honors as a bonus. If he wins the rubber game, he adds a further 50, or 100 in all for that game. All but the last 50 points are also credited to his acceptor, in the honor column.

Should a player require two deals to win a game, each with a different acceptor, making, say, 16 on one deal and 20 on another, the acceptor on the first deal gets no bonus of 50, although it may be urged that he helped to win the game. It is only the acceptor on the deciding hand that scores 50.

PENALTIES

If a player overbids his hand and undertakes a contract that fails to win as many tricks as he bid, neither side scores anything toward game, but each of the opponents takes 50 in honors for each trick by which the contract fails, no matter what the trump suit may be, or if it is a no-trumper. The penalty is always 50 a trick, but it may be doubled or redoubled.

THE BIDDING

The dealer has the first bid, and may name any number of tricks from one to seven in any suit, or at no-trump, or he may pass. The number he bids is the number of tricks he undertakes to win over the first six taken by his side. If the dealer passes, each player in turn to the left can make a bid or pass. If no one will make a bid, the deal is void and passes to the next player on the left.

As soon as a bid is made, each player in turn to the left must either pass or accept, as no bid can be raised, overcalled, or doubled until it has been accepted by some player and a partnership formed to bid against. The usual forms are, "One heart," "I accept," or "I accept one heart," or "I pass."

The acceptor signifies his willingness to be the dummy partner of the bidder for that deal on that declaration, but he does not bind himself to continue the partnership in case any further bidding takes place.

Any player making a bid before the previous bid has been accepted is barred from bidding until the previous bid has been accepted and some other bid made. The player in error is then free to accept, or he may bid higher if the new bid is accepted before it gets to his turn.

If no one will accept a bid, it is void, and it becomes the turn of the player to the left of the unaccepted bidder to make a bid or pass, just as if the unaccepted bid had never been made. If a bid of three spades is the first one made and no one accepts it, the next player may bid one club, or anything he likes. If he is not accepted, it is the turn of the player to his left, and so on. A player whose bid has been refused cannot bid again until some other bid is made and accepted, but he may be the acceptor of the new bid.

If no one can make an acceptable bid, the deal is void, and passes to the left.

OVERCALLING

The moment a bid is accepted, each player in turn to the left of the acceptor, including the one whose bid has just been accepted, may bid higher or pass. Either of the pair who are now left as the opponents of the declaration can double in his proper turn, after which either the bidder or his acceptor can redouble, but that ends it.

If no one will overcall an acceptance, the acceptor himself cannot bid higher, because he has signified that the declaration made suits him better than anything else. If he had a better bid in view he should not have accepted. But the bidder may have another chance to get a better partner in another declaration.

Suppose S bids two spades, W and N passing, and E accepts. If S had a two-suiter, or did not like E for a partner, he might now bid two no-trumps, or three in some suit other than spades. If S passes when E accepts, it will be W's turn to bid higher or pass. If W bids, either N or E or S may accept him. If W passes, N may bid, and either E, S, or W may accept N. If three players pass an acceptance without a bid or double, the bidding is closed.

If a bid has been made and accepted, and the player who overcalls it cannot find an acceptor, the bid that overcalls is void, and the situation returns to the previous acceptance. Suppose S bid two spades, accepted by W, and N then bids three diamonds, which is not accepted. The bidding returns to the two spades, and it is E's turn to say something. If E has nothing to say, and S does not want to change from the two-spade contract with W for his partner, the bidding is closed, because N cannot bid again after having failed to find an acceptor for his three diamonds.

A player who has passed an acceptance cannot bid again unless some higher bid is made and accepted, although he may accept such a bid. Suppose S bids two spades, accepted by W, and N passes. If E bids three hearts and no one accepts him, that bid is void. S is then the only one that can bid, because W is barred by

being an acceptor, and N by having passed an acceptance.

RANK OF THE BIDS

Any bid of an equal number of tricks in a superior suit will outrank the lower suit. Two diamonds will overcall two accepted clubs, or three hearts three diamonds. Three no-trumps will overcall any acceptance of three in any suit.

A greater number of tricks in anything will overcall a smaller number in anything. Three clubs will outbid two accepted no-trumps.

DOUBLING

Doubling has no effect on the honors, slams, or bonuses for winning games, nor does it alter the trick values in the bidding. Three clubs doubled and redoubled can still be overcalled by three diamonds; but if a double stands, the trick values are doubled in scoring toward game, the penalties are doubled if the contract fails, and the revoke penalty is doubled.

When the final bid and acceptance is doubled, and the contract succeeds, three by cards in clubs would be worth 36, and a game won. If it was redoubled three clubs would be worth 72 and a game won; but the 50 bonus for winning the game is not doubled; neither are the scores for honors as held.

In addition to this, the declarer would score 50 in honors for fulfilling a doubled contract. If it was redoubled he would score 100. If he made any tricks in excess of his contract, he would score 50 more for each of them, 100 if redoubled. His acceptor scores all these gains.

If the contract fails, the declarer's side scores nothing but honors, and each of his opponents score 100 for each trick by which it fails, instead of the 50 they would have scored without doubling. If they are redoubled, they score 200 for each trick over their book, which is the difference between the contract and seven.

It is only after a bid has been accepted that one of the opposing partners can double in his proper turn. A double reopens the bidding, and if the partner does not approve of it, he can perhaps bid himself out of it. If he cannot find an acceptor, the double stands. Either the bidder or his acceptor can take himself out of the double, as doubling is the same as a higher bid, but automatically accepted.

Suppose S bids two spades, W accepts and N doubles. If E does not like the double, or thinks it unsound, he can bid three in anything, or two no-trumps, and if he can find an acceptor the doubled spade is void. If he cannot find an acceptor and the partners who are doubled decline to go further, the double stands.

THE PLAY

The final bid and acceptance being settled, the player to the left of the bidder may lead any card he pleases. If that player happens to be the acceptor, the player to his left leads.

The moment the first card is led by the proper player, and before the second card is played to the trick, the acceptor's cards are laid on the table, face up and sorted into suits, trumps to his right, wherever he happens to sit, so that the dummy may be immediately to the right or left of the declarer, or opposite him. Each player in turn must follow suit if he can, the declarer and dummy playing one after the other if they happen to sit together.

The declarer takes full charge of the play from his acceptor's hand, the dummy not being allowed to offer any advice, nor to suggest the play of any card, nor to remind the declarer of any previous play or any incident of the bidding.

The revoke penalty is 50 points in honors. See Law 53. If a player revokes and fails to correct the error in time, he pays 50 in honors to each of the three others. But if his partner has failed to ask him if he had none of the suit to which he renounced, the partner must pay the 50 points to each of the three others, the player in error paying nothing.

The declarer gathers all the tricks for his side. The first six that constitute his book are usually gathered together, or kept separate from tricks over the book, so that each side may readily count the number of tricks already won.

Either of the opponents may gather the tricks for their side, and they usually bunch the tricks that make their book, so that all over that number may be recognized as defeating the contract. This is usually referred to as the number of tricks by which the declarer is "set."

SCORING

PIRATE SCORE-PAD

The score-pads for pirate bridge are ruled in four columns, with a space for the player's initials at the top of each. These columns are divided into two parts by a heavy horizontal line across the pad, below which all trick scores are entered, and above which all the honors, slams, and penalties are recorded, with the bonuses for going game and winning the rubber.

No one can score below the line toward game but the individual player who made the last accepted bid, as he plays the hand as declarer, no matter what bids, or by whom made, have preceded his.

If the contract succeeds, the declarer scores the value of the tricks below the line, honors, if any, above, and if he wins a game adds 50 for it. In case a game is won, a line is drawn under all four columns, to show that each player must start afresh for the next game. Any points short of 30 made on that game will not count toward the next game.

All the points made by the declarer are also

credited to the account of his acceptor, but only in the honor column, above the line. Suppose the declarer makes four odd in spades and there are four honors between the two hands. He scores 36 below the line, and draws a line under it to indicate a game won. Then he takes 36 in honors and 50 for the game, or 86 above the line. His acceptor is then credited with the whole 122 in honors.

In order to show the manner in which successive scores would be entered, the following diagram is arranged to keep points made on the same deal opposite each other, but in practice, of course, there would be no space left between one entry and the one next above it.

These scores were made in this order:

(A) Jones started with four odd in spades and four honors, winning the first game with Smith as his acceptor.

(B) Green made four odd in diamonds, and again Smith was the acceptor. This does not quite reach game but is worth 28 below, and 14 for simple honors, Smith getting the entire 42 in honors.

(C) On the third deal, White is the declarer and Jones the acceptor, making three odd and 30 aces. This wins the game, giving White a bonus of 50 in addition to the 30 aces, while Jones gets the 110 in honors. A line is drawn under this game.

PIRATE BRIDGE SCORE PAD

	JONES	SMITH	GREEN	WHITE
(G)	50	—	—	—
(F)	145	—	—	199
(E)	—	—	—	20
(D)	64	50	64	50
(C)	110	—	—	80
(B)	—	42	14	—
(A)	86	122	—	—
(A)	36	—	—	—
(B)	—	—	28	—
(C)	—	—	—	30
(E)	—	—	20	—
(F)	54	—	—	—
	545	214	126	379

(D) On the fourth deal Green bid up to four hearts, Jones accepting him, but the contract failed by one trick, so that there was no score below the line, Smith and White each taking 50 penalty for the trick by which the contract failed, while Green and Jones scored four honors in one hand in hearts, 64 points. [In actual practice this would be entered as 14 for them on the balance, nothing for the opponents.]

(E) On the next deal Green bid no-trump and White accepted him. They made two by cards only, aces easy, so Green scored 20 below the

line and White got the 20 in honors. The 28 points that Green made two deals before is of no use to him to win this game, as the game in which the 28 was made is closed.

(F) On the next deal, Jones made a little slam in spades, with five honors between partners. This gives him 54 and a game below, and 45 in honors, 50 for the slam, 50 for game, 145 above the line. White being the acceptor, he gets the whole 199 in honors.

As this makes two games won by Jones, he wins the rubber and adds (G) 50 points for it, which are not shared by his acceptor. The scores are now all added up, ready to be balanced, as each player wins from or loses to each of the others.

SETTLING

As it is usual in clubs to throw off the units and even the tens, reducing the amounts to even hundreds or fifties, we get this result in dollars:

JONES	SMITH	GREEN	WHITE
545	214	126	379
5	2	1	4

There are then two ways to settle. The simpler is to call the lowest score 0, deduct it from the others, as all are plus, and add these three winnings together, which must be what the lowest

score loses. The next step is to multiply each score by 4 and deduct what the lowest score loses from each in turn, thus:

	JONES	SMITH	GREEN	WHITE
	4	1	0	3=8
4 times:	+ 16	+ 4	+ 0	+ 12
Less 8:	- 8	- 8	- 8	- 8
	+ 8	- 4	- 8	+ 4

The value of the game is 12 points, the winnings shared by Jones and White; the losses paid by Smith and Green. As two share the 12, this would be called a 6 rubber.

Another way is to take the scores as they stand and balance each with the other separately, like this:

JONES	SMITH	GREEN	WHITE
5	2	1	4
+ 3	- 3	- 4	- 1
+ 4	+ 1	- 1	+ 2
+ 1	- 2	- 3	+ 3
+ 8	- 4	- 8	+ 4

Jones is plus 3 as compared to Smith, so Smith is put down minus 3. Jones is plus 4 as com-

pared to Green, so Green is minus 4. Then we get to Smith, who is 1 plus as compared to Green, but 2 minus when compared to White, and so on. The result is the same by either method.

When several players belong to a table or play several rubbers without settling up, it is usual to carry the results forward on a "wash-book" or "flogger," upon which the number of points, or their value in cash, is set down as a plus or minus opposite the name of the player. A wash-book may be ruled with separate columns for plus and minus, or one column may do for both if a ring is drawn round the losing end to show that the player is so much "in the hole."

Here is an example of a wash-book for a table of six players at the end of four rubbers:

Jones	+ 8	+ 8	+ 13	+ 8
Smith	— 4	+ 1	+ 1	+ 5
Green	— 8	— 10	— 10	— 6
White	+ 4	+ 4	+ 2	— 1
Black		— 6	— 10	— 10
Brown		+ 3	+ 4	+ 4

The first score noted is that of the rubber scored in full on a previous page. For the second rubber Jones and White were cut out, giving way to Brown and Black, so that the Jones and White scores remain stationary. On the third rubber, Green and Smith retired, allowing Jones and White to come in again, and so on.

The wash-book can be checked up at any time, as the winnings must always balance the losses for the whole table. At the end of the fourth rubber it will be seen that seventeen dollars, or dimes, or whatever the stakes may be, have been won and lost.

AVERAGE RUBBER VALUES

Those who are accustomed to auction may be interested in the following table of eight consecutive rubbers with four good players, the points won by each being set down opposite the number of the rubber under their initials. The number of deals to each rubber is also indicated. Only three contracts were lost; one in the second rubber, two in the fourth. Time, 3 hours.

Rubbers	Deals	A	B	C	D
1	3	158	100	410	618
2	3	0	400	160	184
3	3	290	300	775	175
4	4	540	464	56	0
5	2	140	296	0	116
6	2	370	130	190	0
7	4	389	346	246	489
8	3	114	122	312	372

In any rubber that is finished in two deals, both being won by the same player, there must be some player of the four whose score is zero.

These eight rubbers were played at ten cents a

point. The following table shows the amounts won and lost in each in dollars, only the units being thrown off. This made the basis of calculation for the first rubber, A 16, B 10, C 41, and D 62. Calling the low score 0, we get: A 6, B 0, C 31, and D 52, which, added, gives us B's losses at 89. The whole result has been calculated in this way:

	A	B	C	D
1	— 65	— 89	+ 35	+ 119
2	— 74	+ 86	— 10	— 2
3	— 39	— 35	+ 157	— 83
4	+ 110	+ 78	— 82	— 106
5	—	+ 64	— 56	— 8
6	+ 79	— 17	+ 7	— 69
7	+ 8	— 8	— 48	+ 48
8	— 47	— 43	+ 33	+ 57
	197 225	228 192	232 196	224 268
	197	192	196	224
	— 28	+ 36	+ 36	— 44

If we add the gains on these eight rubbers, they show a total of 881, or an average of about 110 to the rubber. As this is only one tenth of the number of points, the rubbers must have averaged 1100, and if we consider this as divided between two winners and two losers, the average points won or lost would be about 550, but of course this is a very small number upon which to base an estimate, and the players were all first class.

BIDDING TACTICS

In all games of cards there are certain elementary principles or conventions which any one who sits down to play in mixed company should know. To cut into a rubber without a fair knowledge of these conventions would be like attempting a fox-trot without knowing any of the steps.

The tactics peculiar to this new form of auction have not yet been tried out in practice by a sufficient number of good players, nor for a long enough time, for one to be able to lay down any hard and fast rules, but there are certain fundamental principles of bidding and accepting, to which may be added some suggestions which are clearly advantageous. When we come to the play of the cards, the rules which are given in the following pages can be followed with confidence, as they have been thoroughly tested in both bridge and auction.

It will greatly facilitate the reader's understanding of the principles of bidding if the actual cards shown in the diagrams are laid out before

him, in order to accustom the eye to the combinations.

As these pages will probably be read by a number of persons who are already familiar with auction, it may be well to point out that while the object of the bidding in the two games is essentially the same, the goal is arrived at in a different way.

One great difference between pirate bridge and auction is that there is no occasion to jump at the chance to bid the full value of your hand at once, nor to name an expensive suit with a view to shutting out minor or informatory bids by an adversary, or to prevent two of them from building up a declaration that you cannot afford to overcall. This is because in pirate you have no adversary until the bidding is finished. The player whom you are trying to shut out may be your best friend.

Another point of difference is that there is no hurry about anticipating an adverse declaration by indicating a lead, at the risk of being left with it and set. Further, there is no need to bid one suit in order to deny another, which is one of the most embarrassing positions in auction. The much disputed point about taking out the partner's no-trumpers has no interest for the pirate. No such problem ever presents itself.

FREE AND FORCED BIDS

There is a sharp distinction between what are called free bids and forced bids. The free bid is one that there is no apparent reason for making, unless it is to show something worth while, such as two or three sure tricks, or a strong trump holding.

A forced bid is invariably made to overcall a previous acceptance, and is one that the player must make if he is going to get into the game at all, or a bid that he will not have another chance to make as cheaply. Those who make these forced bids must not be credited with the same strength that would be inferred from a free bid of the same kind. When once the fight for the final declaration is started, each player must do the best he can with the material in hand, without much regard to conventions.

In order to illustrate the difference between the two classes of bids, let us suppose the dealer, S, holds five or six spades to the king jack, and not more than one outside trick in his hand. He is under no obligation to bid a spade. There will be ample opportunity for that later. But if there is a partnership in hearts already bid and accepted against him, he must bid the spade or surrender all hope of scoring anything on that deal.

MAJOR AND MINOR SUITS

One of the first things to learn is the importance of distinguishing between original or free bids in diamonds or clubs, which are known as the "minor" suits, and the same bids in hearts or spades, which are called the "major" suits.

No good player ever bids one trick in a minor suit with any intention of playing the hand with that suit for the trump. The development may be such that he will see it is the best declaration for the combined hands, or the only defense against strong bidding in other suits, but he never starts out with the deliberate intention of working to win eleven tricks while there is any chance of going game with nine or ten.

THE MINOR SUITS

For this reason the minor suits, clubs and diamonds, are never regarded as possible trump suits in the original or free bids unless they are unusually long. They are looked upon rather as trick winners, to assist some better declaration. With this principle in mind, good players avoid free bids in minor suits that are without the "tops"—that is, without two sure tricks. But they will bid those two sure tricks without any regard to the length of the suit, because length in such a case is not a help but a detriment, especially if

the opponents get the winning declaration with a trump suit.

This is a point that almost every writer on the game of auction has failed to see. If you are bidding on a suit to show two sure tricks in it, the suit not being trumps, but good for two tricks with or against any trump declaration, the greater the probability that you can win those two tricks, the better the bid. This would seem to be too obvious to require stating, but many of the best players have never stopped to consider it.

It is easily proved that if you hold nothing but the ace-king and one small club, hearts being trumps, your chance to win two tricks in clubs are two-and-a-half times better than if you held six cards to the ace-king, because in 1000 deals the three-card suit will go round twice 784 times, while the six-card suit will do so only 341 times. No matter which side is playing the hand, the suit is weakened by its length. Either it will not win two tricks against the opponents without the risk of their ruffing it, or it will not give your partner two safe reentries. The two sure tricks need not be both in a minor suit, but that is a matter we shall come to presently, in the chapter on compensating tricks. The principle to impress on the beginner is that he should not bid clubs or diamonds originally, as free bids, except to show

sure tricks. It will be time enough to show length in later bids.

These remarks do not apply to auction, length being essential in that game, because the bidder may be left in. The bid is perfectly safe in pirate, as the player who accepts it does so with the full knowledge that the suit may be short.

THE MAJOR SUITS

These are sometimes called game-going suits, because there is a fair chance of winning the game with four odd in hearts or spades, while five odd is a difficult proposition. The major suits are always bid with the idea that they may be the final declaration, as they are in about 12 deals out of every 25. As a trump suit should always be long enough to give reasonable hope of outlasting the opponents, the minimum fixed by convention, based on experience, is five cards, or four headed by the ace and two picture cards, or four cards, all of which are honors.

High cards, or trick winners, are just as essential for the bids in the major suits as in the minor suits, because the suit bid may not be the trump after all, and the high cards may be what the partner is depending on for the defense. The conventional standard for a free bid in a major suit is three tricks in the hand, at least one of

them in the suit named, which must have a minimum length of five cards.

Five cards in a major suit, even with two high cards at the top, is not a sound opening bid unless there is at least one trick outside. If there are six cards in the suit the extra trump may be as good as an outside trick if the suit becomes the trump.

For example: Five hearts to the ace-queen is not a sound bid unless there is an outside ace or king-queen suit, and a probable trick besides; but six hearts to the ace-king is a good bid, even if there is not another trick in the hand.

Original or free bids in a major suit show that the player has both length and strength enough to play the hand with that suit for the trump.

THE FOUNDATION

The first principle of sound bidding is based on these two considerations. All minor-suit declarations show assistance for a better bid, and encourage such bids from any player who can use those two tricks to support a major suit or no trumps.

All major-suit bids ask for assistance from any player who can support the trump with winning cards in plain suits, or who can ruff a plain suit, on the second round at the furthest.

Minor-suit bids want a change; major-suit bids do not.

If the original free bids are not sound, no amount of bidding afterward will correct the impression the first bid has made on the other players. If there is no sound free bid in the hand, wait for the second round.

SURE TRICKS

When one speaks of a suit being headed by two sure tricks, it is remarkable how few players know a sure trick from a probable one. When we say

a suit is good for two sure tricks we should mean that it is good for them in itself, bar trumping, no matter who leads that suit. That is the test; no matter who leads the suit.

In spite of the fact that there are only three combinations of cards at the head of any suit that are good for two sure tricks, regardless of the position of the lead, some persons never seem to learn them. These are:

Both ace and king.

Ace, queen, and jack.

King, queen, and jack.

Whether these combinations are led from, led up to, or led through, they are always good for two tricks if not trumped. But if we examine such combinations as the following the two tricks are conditional:

Ace and queen.

King and queen.

King, jack, ten.

To make two tricks with the ace and queen the king must be on the right, or in the partner's hand. To make two with the king and queen, one of the opponents must lead or play the ace, or the partner must have it. To make two, or even one trick, with king-jack-ten, one of the opponents must play the ace or queen before any of the three named cards has to be put on the trick. If both ace and queen are on the left, the combination is not

worth one trick even. All such combinations are bad free bids unless there is something outside to compensate for their weakness.

COMPENSATING TRICKS

It is not always that a player holds a suit with exactly one or other of the three standard two-sure-trick combinations at the head of it, A K, A Q J, or K Q J, yet there may be two sure tricks in the hand.

If a suit is headed by only one sure trick, such as the ace, and the next honor is the queen, or jack and ten, we call that a suit with a hole in it. The hole in the ace-queen suit is the missing king, which may be held by the adversaries.

If there is a sure trick in some other suit, that trick will compensate for the hole in the suit you propose to bid. There are then two sure and one probable trick in the hand, and it is a legitimate conventional bid, provided there is also length if it is a major suit. If it is a minor suit, length does not matter.

Let us suppose you hold five spades to the A Q 10 and the A J of diamonds. There is a hole in the spade suit, but the ace of diamonds fills it and the queen-ten of spades, with the jack of diamonds, should certainly yield the extra probable trick, even if spades are not the final declaration.

If you hold the ace and two small hearts, with the A J 10 of clubs, you cannot bid the heart, because you have not the requisite length for a possible trump suit. But you do not require length in clubs, and the ace of hearts fills up the hole in the minor suit, so you can safely bid a club, which indicates the two tricks in hand to help a better bid.

NO-TRUMPERS

This is the favorite bid at auction, and all the text-books teach us that it is the declaration at which every player should aim, because of the high scoring value of the tricks and the small number that will win the game. They tell us that if the player has anything resembling a no-trumper he should bid it at once. In spite of this we find that only 7 deals out of every 20 are played at no-trump, as against 11 in the major suits.

At auction the no-trumper is more or less of a gamble, and it would be a much heavier loser than it is if it were not for the modern system of take-out bids and warnings. It is a well-established axiom among good players that "almost anything can happen to a no-trumper." A hand was published in the *N. Y. Sun*, in which one of the best players in the Knickerbocker Whist Club dealt and bid no-trump on four spades to the

A K Q, the K Q J 10 of diamonds, Q 10 6 of clubs, and K 9 of hearts, and lost a little slam.

This is an extreme case, of course, but every player is familiar with the way in which some promising no-trumpers will go to pieces. The player at auction who bids no-trumps on an average hand always hopes his partner will take him out with a good major suit, on account of its greater safety, and the beginner at auction is taught always to take out a no-trumper with any five cards in hearts or spades, regardless of the rest of the hand. This is entirely unnecessary at pirate bridge. There are no take-outs and no warnings.

On account of the risk attached to the original no-trump bid at auction, and the danger of finding one or the other adversary with a big suit against it, three maxims developed. The first was for the leader not to bid, no matter what he had, short of a sure game hand, but to sit tight and beat the declaration. The second was for the partner of the no-trumper to be always on the alert to warn him of his danger if the second hand passed. The third was for the fourth hand to ask a lead against the no-trumper if he thought that it would save the game to get that suit going at once.

But when we come to pirate bridge these conditions cannot exist, and it would be well for those

who are familiar with auction to study the difference in the reasons for bidding no-trumps in one game as compared with the reasons for it in the other.

After a very limited experience with pirate bridge I came to the conclusion that original no-trump bids, especially when the player is a game in, are a mistake, for the following reasons:

At auction, if you do not bid your no-trump at the first opportunity, there may not be a hand at the table strong enough to make a bid, and the deal will be thrown up. If you bid a minor suit and are left with it, you may never get a chance to shift to no-trumps, and the hand is wasted on a vain attempt to go game in diamonds or clubs, when three no-trumps would have been easy.

In pirate bridge both these are impossible. If you pass, some one at the table is sure to bid something, just to start things. If you make any sort of a bid yourself you cannot be left with it, as at auction, for the moment any one accepts you, you can bid something else.

In auction, there is no way to indicate a general distribution of strength among three suits except the no-trumper. All your partner can do is to warn you if he cannot assist you, as he has no idea of where your chief strength lies. The bid is too vague, and he may frighten you off when your hands are actually a perfect fit.

In pirate bridge the object is to secure the partner that can exactly fit your hand, and this can be done only by giving an accurate description of what you hold. There is nothing so indefinite as a no-trump bid. Its main strength may be all in one suit, or it may be scattered through all four. Any one of the suits may be hopelessly weak, and the protection in another may be doubtful.

The strongest no-trumpers at pirate bridge are those that come late in the bidding, when you are sure which player has your weak suit, and know he will accept you, or when you can get the dummy on the right side of you to make sure of guarded honors, which is one of the fine points of the game.

In auction, a player frequently bids no-trump for the sole purpose of beating another player to it, or in order to force either adversary to bid two tricks if he wants the play, or to discourage him from bidding at all. At least half the no-trump bids in modern auction are bluffs.

This is all nonsense at pirate bridge. In a game in which there are no opponents until the last acceptance, the player you are trying to head off may turn out to be your partner. The one whom you wish to discourage from bidding may have the very suit that will win the game if you would let him show it.

But as a no-trumper is one of the most interest-

ing contracts in the game, every pirate bridge player should understand exactly the character of hand that will, at some stage of the bidding, justify him in making such a bid.

WHAT ARE NO-TRUMPERS?

There are abundant opportunities to play no-trumpers, provided one does not bid them too early. The plan is not to bid them and have them overcalled by a suit that the no-trumper alone can support, but to let a suit be accepted by some other player and then force that suit to accept you, either at no-trumps or at an advanced bid in the same suit.

The usual definition of a no-trumper is three aces, or their equal, which would be at least one sure trick in three different suits. This indicates that neither major suit is long enough to bid it, and that the hand is too good to risk wasting it on a minor suit.

While one may hold a good many no-trumpers in the course of an evening's play, very few of them will contain exactly three aces, but under the law of compensation we get this simple rule:

An ace-king suit is as good as an ace. Some think it better, as both cards may win tricks, while an ace can never win more than one. A queen-jack-ten suit is as good as a king and queen,

or an ace, because it will certainly stop the suit if it is led, and must be good for a trick on the third round no matter who leads it. Like the king-queen suit, it may win more than one trick, and may be a shade better than an ace, but not as good as a king and queen. Contrast these two hands:

♥ 7 4 3	♥ 7 4 3
♣ A 10 6 4	♣ K Q 6 4
♦ A 9 3 2	♦ Q J 10 2
♠ A 10	♠ A 10
A	B

The king and queen of clubs in B is just as good as the ace in A. The queen jack and ten of diamonds in B are as sure of stopping the suit as the ace in A. Therefore the cards in B are just as good for a no-trumper as the three aces in A, some would prefer B.

If we pick out the honors in B's hand, we shall find he has one of each, A K Q J 10 and a Q 10 more than his share. Many players judge that they have a no-trumper by picking out the honors in this manner, and if they have a king, or a queen and jack, or queen and ten, more than their share, with three suits stopped, they consider it a fair no-trumper.

WHITEHEAD'S RULE

Many persons like Whitehead's rule, which is to call each ace worth 4, well-guarded kings 2, and guarded queens 1. This gives us 28 for the pack, and any player with a hand that counts one more than the average, which is 7, has a bid.

To illustrate: Ace in one suit, king-jack in each of two others, counts 8, and is a no-trumper. The same count applies to major-suit bids with the requisite length, or to any minor-suit bids. Five spades to the ace-queen, and an outside ace counts 9, and is a good bid.

When the king is with its ace, it counts 4. A queen with its king counts 2. The jack and ten with any high honor are worth 1. Both queen and jack with a higher honor are worth 2. That is, a suit headed by A Q J is worth 6.

Very few no-trumpers are good for the contract, much less the game, and for that reason they require support. In auction, the bidder gambles on finding this support in the thirteen cards opposite him. In pirate bridge he waits until he sees where that support lies and then attaches himself to it.

The auction player will often take a chance on what are called sporty no-trumpers, one long suit with a reentry in another suit, or the ace-king-queen of one minor suit and the ace-king of any

other. The theory is that unless the partner opposite has almost a Yarborough he can stop whichever suit is opened.

Such bids are worse than useless at pirate bridge and would invariably be passed up. All such hands are suit bids, with the prospect of shifting to no-trumps later, when the other suits are located.

EQUAL SUITS

A player will often find himself with two suits which are equally good bids, such as five hearts and five spades, one headed perhaps by the ace, the other, let us say, by king and queen, and it is often a great advantage to be able to show them both.

Under the rule that allows a bidder to overcall himself after he has been accepted, this is easily possible, and it was to allow him this opportunity that the rule was made, because even if he is accepted by a good partner in the first suit he names, he may find a much stronger combination in the other suit.

In auction, the player with two equal suits always bids the higher value first, in order to give his partner an opportunity to choose between the two when the second suit is shown. The opportunity to bid the second suit may not arise, of course, in pirate bridge any more than it does

in auction, but the correct suit should be bid first in case it does.

In auction, where one does not wait for an acceptor, suppose S deals and finds in his hand five hearts and five spades. He bids a spade. Some one else, E or W, bids two diamonds and then S bids two hearts. When it gets to his partner, N, that player will say nothing if the hearts suit him better than spades; but if he prefers the spades he can bid two, which overcalls the two hearts and indicates his preference without increasing the contract. Had S bid the hearts first and N preferred the spades, it would not matter; but if N wanted the hearts, he would have to bid three to overcall two spades.

The same principle, but not for the same reason, applies to the bidding in pirate bridge. The player should always bid the higher suit first, as he will then be ready to show the supporting suit if he gets another bid. With a major and a minor suit, this is often very useful, especially if the minor suit is a sure trick winner. There is no danger of being left with such a contract in pirate bridge, as there would be in auction, unless the player who accepts it can carry it through to success.

ONE-TRICK BIDS

It is highly important that the opening or free bids should be strictly conventional, or the result

may be an acceptance by a partner whose hand does not suit the combination at all, while the one who could have helped you is arrayed against you.

The bid of one trick in a minor suit shows the conventional two-trick hand, and at the same time denies any sound declaration in a major suit, although the hand may be pretty close to a no-trumper.

The bid of one trick in a major suit shows only the average strength for such a declaration, and should not be credited for more than five trumps, with the usual two sure tricks and a trick outside, or one sure in trumps and two outside, although it may be very much stronger than that in side cards.

The importance of restricting this bid to one trick is to indicate to any possible acceptor that he must have some trumps to help you out. In auction, if a player bids a heart and his partner has nothing in hearts, he denies the suit by bidding something else, even at the risk of being left to play it. If the first bid is no-trump and the partner has nothing to assist a no-trumper he will bid any five-card suit, simply as a warning.

But there is no partner in pirate bridge, so this warning never comes. The player sitting opposite is not compelled to tell you he has nothing to help you with in hearts. All he need do is to pass, refusing to accept you as a partner in hearts.

Suppose you bid a spade, no one but the player who has several trumps in his hand will accept you. If the only player at the table who has three or four spades has nothing else, and no singleton, so that he could count on a ruff or two, he will pass, and you will be able to infer that there is no suitable spade combination at the table in that deal. This will lead you to wait until you can join some player who can use your sure tricks to advantage, or perhaps you may be able to bid no-trump, after you have heard some of the other bids and acceptances.

A free bid of one no-trump indicates nothing but the average three-suit-protected hand, and is too vague for practical purposes in pirate bridge, so the player must not be disappointed if he finds such bids are continually passed up by all the other players, chiefly because they want to bid a suit, and get your alleged no-trumper for their dummy. The original no-trump bidder will then be forced to accept the player who is palpably aiming at him, and unless he can seize an opportunity to overcall some other player, he will probably lose a good opportunity of scoring a game by playing the hand himself, simply through having made a premature bid. This is especially true if the one who bids no-trump has a game in, as each of the others will be anxious to prevent him from winning the rubber.

TWO-TRICK BIDS

The player who starts with a free bid of more than one trick in a minor suit will very seldom find an acceptor, unless the combination is such that the game is highly probable. A bid of two in clubs or diamonds shows a solid suit, six or seven sure tricks, either all in one suit, or with an ace in another suit.

To bid two with a suit that has a hole in it, but which can be established in one lead, with an ace of another suit for reentry, is not as good a bid as two on a solid suit. While such a bid may be perfectly correct in showing that if it is the trump no assistance in trumps is needed from the partner, there is no certainty that it will be the trump, and if the final declaration should be no-trumps, the reentry suit may be led and the outside ace lost before the long suit is cleared.

Two-trick bids in minor suits should invariably be confined to solid suits, or suits with two outside reentries, such as ace and king, if the long suit has a hole in it.

Two-trick bids in major suits may be very long suits that are within one of being solid, with an outside ace, as it is very improbable that any player will want a no-trumper when there is such a powerful trump suit in hearts or spades at his disposal anywhere round the table.

Such bids inform the table that if there is any player who can win some tricks in other suits, the combination should go game easily. If two tricks are bid in a minor suit, there will probably be no acceptor, but on the next round some player with good cards in the other suits will propose no-trumps. For this reason two-trick bids in minor suits are a mistake unless the player is willing to be an acceptor, and does not care to wait for a chance to be the bidder on some other player's hand, so as to go game himself. It is not uncommon for a player with one big minor suit to wait until a major suit is overcalled and then bid it himself if he has three or more little trumps. The trouble with all minor-suit bids is that they are seldom wanted for the trump unless five odd can be made, and there is no game combination in either major suit out against it.

Bids of two or three tricks in a major suit are quite another affair. They are an announcement that the bidder will be responsible for the trump situation, and that all he asks from his acceptor is three or four tricks in plain suits to win the game.

It was pointed out in connection with one-trick bids that the acceptor must have some trumps; that he must have such a hand that if he were playing auction he would gladly leave you in. But when you start with a free bid of two or three

in a major suit, you must not be surprised if you find your acceptor has not a trump in his hand. He leaves that part of the game to you. All he supplies is the outside tricks. Such a bid and acceptance effectually puts a stop to any no-trumpers, for that deal, because of the length in one suit declared against such a contract.

Three-trick bids show a solid suit and at least one sure trick outside. They are the sort of hands that are called sporty no-trumpers at auction. The distinction between bids of two and of three is often important. It is never necessary to bid three as a free bid unless you have that outside trick, and the consequence of bidding three just because you think you can make three may be disastrous if you find strong bidding against you.

Let us suppose you start with a bid of three hearts, holding six of that suit with the four top honors and the ace of clubs. The player on your left immediately accepts you, holding nothing but three sure tricks in diamonds. If your bid is sound, it is a game hand.

The beginner should be careful not to bid more than two tricks when his suit is not solid, and then only if he has a sure trick outside, and never to bid three when his suit is not solid unless he has two tricks outside, and one lead will clear his long suit. The acceptor will probably allow for the

contingency in a two-trick bid that the suit named is not solid. If he has an honor in it himself, he will readily read the hand.

At auction, a bid of two no-trumps indicates protection in all four suits, or 100 aces. Such a hand should be good for two odd on its own account if there are not 100 aces in it. A bid of two no-trumps at pirate bridge might be supposed to be inducement enough for any one to accept it at once, so as to secure the score above the line. But the player who accepts such a bid with a couple of tricks in hand at once opens the door for further bidding, and the first player to bid a major suit is sure that no one but the no-trump bidder dare accept him, while there is such a strong hand against the suit.

The best chance to score heavily with a hand which would be a two-no-trump bid at auction, is to bid one trick in a suit, get an acceptor, and start the bidding that way. Then pass up everything until the time is ripe to make a bid that no one can overcall, when you know that there is one player at least who will surely accept you.

Many no-trumpers are played at pirate bridge, but very few are declared until the last round of bids.

ACCEPTING

Beginners are apt to be entirely too quick on the trigger in accepting a bidder, and do not give sufficient consideration to two of the most important things in the game: the strength indicated as necessary for the acceptor, and the position of the dummy.

While these two elements are largely interdependent, one may have the strength regardless of the position. The bid indicates that a certain amount and kind of support is needed, and the value of the cards that propose to furnish this support may depend entirely upon the position of the dummy.

The experienced auction player will readily understand that while an ace-queen suit may be worth two tricks if a finesse is successful, it is a certainty for those two tricks, bar trumping, if it is led up as fourth hand. The same is true of king-jack-ten.

This is one of the fine points of the game, and in order to illustrate the point, let us look at one of the hands played when this game was still in the experimental stage.

PIRATE BRIDGE

	♥ 8 7 2	
	♣ J 9 6 3	
	♦ Q	
	♠ K J 8 4 2	
♥ 6		♥ 10 5 3
♣ A Q 10 4		♣ K 5 2
♦ 8 6 4 3		♦ A K 9 7 2
♠ A Q 7 6		♠ 10 5
	NE WS	
	♥ A K Q J 9 4	
	♣ 8 7	
	♦ J 10 5	
	♠ 9 3	

S dealt and bid two hearts, indicating that he had all the trumps necessary, but not a sure trick anywhere else. W accepted, figuring that he had enough in the black suits to win the game.

If the position of the two hands were reversed, this would be true, because if the bidder with the big trump suit sat on the left of W's cards he could lead through both adversaries and make each of dummy's ace-queen suits good for two tricks, which wins the game. With dummy on the left of the bidder, who has not a plain-suit trick in his hand, this is impossible. The consequence was that S had to lead through both those black suits, or lead away from them, and lost both the queens, failing to go game.

The correct bidding on this hand would be for

W to pass, and if either of the others accepted S, it would be W's chance to bid spades. If no one accepted S, the bid would be void, and W could bid one spade. If E accepted S, which is likely, W need not be afraid to bid two spades over the two hearts. No one will accept him unless that one thinks he can make it. N would undoubtedly accept, and W's cards are then in an excellent position to be led up to. They would lose only one trick in each of the plain suits, scoring one game toward the rubber for W, and winning 122 points. With S for a partner, in hearts, all that W could get would be 16 and 64 in honors.

This illustration will probably impress upon the beginner the importance of refusing to accept a bid when you have a good bid yourself and are not afraid of any combination against you. In the hand just given, W is not afraid of the heart contract, if E accepts it, as N can lead through both E and S up to W's powerful hand, and if they go to five, W would certainly double.

This hand is a good example of the manner in which the best spade combination will continually find itself opposed to the best heart combination, or some other suit, or even no-trump. With E for a partner, S can make three odd, but no more if W opens the spade suit, as N would win the second round, or the first, and lead a club upon seeing dummy's big diamond suit.

At auction, S's bid would never have been interfered with, and he would have played the hand with N for his dummy, and found himself unable to make more than two odd. The only resource for W would have been to bid the spades, only to find five trumps over him on the left, if he got the contract, and to stop at two by cards.

WHEN TO ACCEPT

The best accepting hands are those that give no promise of being able to make any good bid of their own, but which can contribute several tricks to the combination if they pick a good partner. If the tricks upon which a player accepts are high cards in two or three suits, it may be better to wait and bid no-trumps, but when some of the probable tricks are to be made by ruffing or by getting guarded honors led up to, the acceptance is usually the best thing.

It often happens that a player sits between a bid and acceptance, and cannot get in his own bid, but if he will have a little patience, the opportunity must come for him to declare.

A player will sometimes have an excellent bid himself, yet be forced to accept some other bid because he cannot get the desired opportunity to get in his own bid. Here is a typical case of that kind, in which a player accepts six consecutive bids.

	♥ Q J 3	
	♣ A K Q 8 6 2	
	♦ 7 3	
	♠ 9 4	
♥ 6		♥ 10 9 5 4 2
♣ 9 7 4 3		♣ J 10 5
♦ Q J 10 2		♦ A K 6
♠ Q 10 7 5		♠ 8 3
	N W E S	
	♥ A K 8 7	
	♣ —	
	♦ 9 8 5 4	
	♠ A K J 6 2	

S dealt and bid a spade, accepted by W. Then N bid two clubs, which W also accepted. This allowed E to start bidding the heart suit and S began to accept. When W shifted to the spades, S accepted him, and when N went to no-trumps, S accepted that also. W continued to bid spades, E hearts, and N no-trumps, S accepting each in turn until it got to five hearts over four no-trumps, E playing the hand with S for his dummy and W to lead.

It is interesting to observe that either S or W could have made three spades, but no more. N and W could have made two clubs, but no more. N and S can make three no-trumps, but no more; but five by cards in hearts is easy for E.

ERRORS IN ACCEPTING

There are two errors into which the beginner is likely to fall in accepting. The first is the temptation to grab at the strong hand for a partner, with the idea of riding to victory on the bidder's coat-tails. The other is declining to accept a strong partner because that would give the bidder the game or rubber.

When pirate bridge was first played, it was found that if a player who was a game in had a pretty strong hand, three aces and three kings for example, and bid no-trump, no one would accept him, as that would give him the game and rubber. At first the no-trump hand would accept some one else, but players soon saw through the conspiracy and the deal was thrown out, as no one could accept a bid against such cards with any hope of success.

This looked like a serious defect in the general scheme of the game, but it was soon found to be a very short-sighted policy to refuse a partnership with an unusually strong hand, and players quickly realized that prompt acceptance is the key to success.

The refusal to accept a partner because it would give him the rubber game was an idea carried over from auction, which attaches so much importance to the rubber that players will risk being penal-

ized several hundred points to save it. Pirate bridge players soon discovered that this did not apply to the new game at all, and that the great point was to win double from two other players, which would leave a handsome balance of profit after paying for the rubber.

In order to make this matter clear, as it is one of the most important considerations in accepting, let us suppose the score stands thus:

N	E	S	W
122	68	82	104
		40	
	36		

E and S have each won a game when S deals and bids two no-trumps. All refuse to accept him. The bid being void, N bids a spade, but S, the only player who could accept, refuses to do so. That bid being void, E bids a heart, and again the only one who could accept refuses to do so, and the deal is thrown out. Here are the hands:

[The reader may be reminded that while original no-trump bids are not recommended, a player holding four aces may bid two no-trumps, simply to indicate the fact, and induce an immediate acceptance.]

and E wins 5, S wins 1, while N and W each lose 3.

But the most interesting part of this hand is W's score. He loses three dollars if S accepts E. If anyone accepted S's bid, W might lose much more. When S bid two no-trumps, W should have accepted at once, and no matter what N or E might bid after that, S would have refused both of them, as he would be confident of being accepted again and again by W, and wants to secure the score for 100 aces himself, to say nothing of the rubber.

The beginner will observe that if N's bid is not accepted it is void, and under the rules he cannot bid again until some other bid is accepted. E's heart bid would fall under the same ban, and after these two attempts they would have to give it up and leave the no-trumper in, as S would never have to bid more than two if no other bid is accepted.

S makes four odd at no trump, 100 aces and the rubber, adding 240 to his score, and 190 to W's score. Now balance the rubber and it will be found that instead of losing three dollars, W wins three, while N and E are each five minus, S winning seven. That is to say, W's anxiety to keep S from winning the rubber by refusing to accept his no-trump bid cost W six dollars.

It was to make such selfishness unprofitable

that it was decided, in framing the laws for pirate bridge, after due consideration of all the aspects of the situation, to make the game worth only 50 points and add only 50 for the rubber. The credit for the most interesting analysis of the influence that the game and rubber points would have upon the popularity of the game is due to Mr. E. T. McLaughlin, a New York lawyer and member of the Knickerbocker Whist Club, who took a decided interest in pirate bridge from the start.

His point is this: It will readily be seen that if a player can win from two others by promptly accepting a good partner, he stands to win all the trick and honor points, which should be 48 at least, and he may also win the game points if the hand goes game. The only thing that would deter him would be the large amount he might have to pay if the bidder he accepted won the rubber, and the only thing that might make the game unpopular, would be the size of the losses of the player who was in bad luck and had to pay three others such large amounts.

If we assume that a prompt acceptor helped to win even such a small game as four by cards and simple honors in hearts, he would get 98 each from two players, and all he would lose would be the extra 50 rubber points that would go to his own partner, still leaving him with a net profit of

146 for prompt accepting. This should be sufficient inducement for anyone.

ACCEPTING MINOR SUITS

It is an axiom among good players that no one wants to play a minor suit for the trump if there is a higher declaration between the two hands that is equally promising. When this game of pirate bridge was young, players were shy of accepting minor-suit bids for that reason.

This is usually a mistake. All bids and also all acceptances are for the purpose of giving such information as shall lead to the best combination of forces in the end. Like good strategy in war, the best results are based upon the accuracy of this information and the amount of it.

If S bids a club and no one accepts him, neither he nor any other player knows how the club suit is distributed, and the assumption would be that no one could afford to say he had more than two or three little clubs. Another inference would be that the club bidder had a much better declaration that he was holding back. The last inference would be important in case such a declaration was made later, especially no-trump.

If any player has more than his share of clubs, say four or five, with one or two honors, and no suit that he can bid to advantage later, he should

accept the club at once. He is then in a position to accept a better bid, as those who have yet to speak will know that either of two players can protect the club suit, which may be very important.

The simple rule, therefore, for accepting free bids of one trick in a minor suit is that the acceptor should have the suit stopped, in case he should not be the partner of the first bidder when the final declaration is reached. Here is an example of how an opportunity was missed by failing to observe this rule:

	♥ A K 6 2	
	♣ 8	
	♦ A 7 5 4 2	
	♠ K J 8	
♥ Q J 10		♥ 8 3
♣ 9 3 2		♣ Q J 10 7
♦ K Q 8		♦ J 10 9
♠ A 9 3 2		♠ Q 7 5 4
	NE WS	
	♥ 9 7 5 4	
	♣ A K 6 5 4	
	♦ 6 3	
	♠ 10 6	

S dealt and bid a club, and all three passed. W then bid a spade, just to start things, and N, who had the spades stopped twice, hoped to get S for a partner by bidding no-trump, but E ac-

cepted, as he could stop the spades. N did not like this and took himself out with two diamonds, which W accepted, and they made a small slam, losing only the first club trick. This cost E 312 points, as W and N each won 156.

If E accepts the club bid promptly, and then accepts N's no-trumper, N will not be afraid of him, as he will trust him to stop the clubs, and the diamond suit will never be heard from. It is a game hand at no-trump, as all S can win is two tricks in clubs, while W wins a spade and a diamond. This shows that E would have won 80 from two players, or 160, instead of losing 312, a difference of 472.

The fact that one has a better bid in hand should not prevent a prompt acceptance of a bid in a minor suit, because when the time comes to make that better bid the fact that part of it is based on the ability to stop the suit first named may have considerable weight with the player who is best fitted to accept the better bid.

One frequently finds that an immediate acceptance of one in a minor suit, clubs or diamonds, is overcalled by something else and accepted. Now the player who was the acceptor of the minor suit in the first place can turn round and bid it himself, his first acceptance giving the original bidder confidence to accept him and stick to him. Here is a rather interesting case of this kind.

PIRATE BRIDGE

	♥ 8 5 4	
	♣ J 10 7 4	
	♦ — —	
	♠ K Q J 10 4 3	
♥ A 7 6 3	N W E S	♥ 10 9 2
♣ A K 9 5 2		♣ Q 8 6
♦ K 10 7 6		♦ 5 4 3 2
♠ — —		♠ A 6 2
	♥ K Q J	
	♣ 3	
	♦ A Q J 9 8	
	♠ 9 8 7 5	

S dealt and bid a diamond, which W at once accepted. N bid two spades, which S accepted, whereupon W bid three diamonds. He could not bid no-trump, as the spade suit seemed to be solid against him. Then N went to three spades, but S declined to accept him, as he correctly inferred that W would ruff the spades.

W made a grand slam in diamonds, which S lost the advantage of, so far as going game is concerned, by his accepting N's spade bid and letting W take up the running on the diamonds. If N goes to five spades, E will double and set the contract.

It frequently happens that although the bidder has nothing but a one-trick bid, no one can accept him. This may be because none of the missing

honors is sufficiently guarded. A player bidding a club with six to the ace-king-ten may find the queen with only one guard to it, and unable to accept. For this reason if two players pass a one-trick bid in a minor suit and the third has four small ones, he should accept. Five in suit should accept at once in any position.

A player with only three to a jack should not accept unless he has an unusually strong outside hand, because in the later bidding he may be trusted for the stopper that will not be forthcoming. Three to a queen is about the weakest for an acceptance of a one-trick bid, especially in a minor suit.

ACCEPTING MAJOR SUITS

As the major suits, hearts and spades, are bid in the hope that they will prove to be the final declaration and the trump, the acceptor must have sufficient strength to support them. Auction players will easily recognize the class of hand with which they would gladly leave the partner in with his heart or spade declaration. But the player who begins with pirate bridge, and has not had the benefit of training at auction, should be cautioned not to accept a major-suit bid of one only unless he has at least three sure tricks in his hand, with some length in trumps, and not to count trumps as tricks unless he can ruff a suit. Here is a good example of careful bidding:

PIRATE BRIDGE

	♥ Q J 10 7 2	
	♣ 9 7 5	
	♦ K Q J 7	
	♠ 7	
♥ A K 8 3		♥ 6 4
♣ 8 3		♣ K J 10 6 2
♦ A 8 6 2		♦ 9 5
♠ J 9 4		♠ Q 8 6 3
	N W E S	
	♥ 9 5	
	♣ A Q 4	
	♦ 10 4 3	
	♠ A K 10 5 2	

S dealt and bid a spade, which W accepted. He has three tricks in plain suits and an honor in trumps. N, who can trump spades, bids two hearts, and W accepts that also, knowing that N must have a pretty strong side suit, as he cannot have sure tricks in hearts.

When it gets round to E he takes advantage of his first chance to bid and says three clubs, which S accepts. Now W shows good judgment in picking the suit for the trump in which he has the smaller cards, keeping the high hearts as sure trick winners in a plain suit. He bids three spades, which S accepts, and that ends it, N leading a club to E's declaration.

Dummy wins with the queen and puts W in with a heart to lead the nine of trumps. This

catches the queen eventually, making five tricks in trumps, two in hearts, two in clubs, and the diamond; 122 points. E and S could have made those three clubs that E bid. N and W could have made four hearts, but it looked to W as if he must lose two spades and two clubs, which save the game. The hand is another good example of the equal fighting power of the two major suits, when allowed to select the partner best fitted to help the declaration. Either can go game on the hand.

ACCEPTING TWO-TRICK BIDS

Any free bid of two tricks shows that the bidder does not need any assistance in that suit, should it prove to be the trump, and that he can probably run it down at no-trump. Bids of two that overcall other bids are often forced, or made to emphasize the holding, such as N's bids in both the preceding hands.

The player who starts with a bid of two tricks asks his acceptor to have something in the other suits, and it is often a preliminary to accepting a no-trumper. As many of these hands go game, even in a minor suit, the first player to the left who has enough in other suits should accept. The acceptance will almost certainly be overcalled by some player who wants that suit to help out a better declaration, and then the acceptor will be in an excellent position to bid his own

hand. The danger is in accepting when one has not the necessary strength, or is not in the position for a dummy to get the most out of one's cards. Take this situation:

	♥ K Q 9 8	
	♣ 8 5	
	♦ 10 6 5 2	
	♠ K Q J	
♥ 5 4		♥ A J 10 2
♣ 10 9 6 4		♣ 3
♦ A Q 8		♦ K J 7 4
♠ 9 8 7 3		♠ A 6 5 2
	N W E S	
	♥ 7 6 3	
	♣ A K Q J 7 2	
	♦ 9 3	
	♠ 10 4	

S dealt and bid two clubs. W accepted. This is not a legitimate acceptance, because W's cards are on the wrong side of the declaration to be good for more than one sure trick. When N passed, E bid two no-trumps. S accepted and W then bid three spades, which N accepted, but when E went to three no-trumps, accepted by S, it went to N, who doubled.

N argues that if W had two sure tricks when he accepted the original two-club bid, he either holds ace of spades and clubs, or two top clubs. Had N been right about this, his double would have

won points. But W's acceptance is unsound, and we shall see that the consequences of an unsound acceptance may be even more serious than an unsound bid.

W led the spade and E won the trick. Six club tricks follow, on which E discards three hearts and two spades. Then a diamond from dummy and N makes two spades, after W puts on the ace of diamonds second hand. The student will observe that N dare not discard his high spades while dummy has the ten. When N puts E in with a heart, expecting W to win another diamond, the game is lost, as E has the king of diamonds.

When a player makes a free bid of two in a major suit, hearts or spades, or bids more than necessary to overcall the previous acceptance, such as three spades over two hearts, the best acceptor is the one with a long suit that can be established in one lead, with a reentry, if he is not fortunate enough to have a solid suit.

Scattered strength is not what is wanted when all the trumps are in one hand, because there is usually nothing in the bidder's hand but the trumps, and what he wants is discards. The exception would be if the player sat on the right of the bidder and had tenaces or guarded kings to be led up to, but someone else would probably accept before it got round to him. These tenace

suits and guarded kings were always more or less of a gamble at auction, but in pirate bridge they are either a certainty on the right, or very weak on the left of the declarer. Look at this hand:

	♥ 10 9 4	
	♣ 10 9 4	
	♦ Q 6 3	
	♠ K Q 9 5	
♥ 8 5		♥ 6 3
♣ A Q 5 2		♣ K J 8 3
♦ K 8 5 2		♦ A J 10
♠ A J 6		♠ 10 8 4 3
	N W E S	
	♥ A K Q J 7 2	
	♣ 7 6	
	♦ 9 7 4	
	♠ 7 2	

S dealt and bid two hearts, which W accepted. If S's bid is conventional he has nothing but the trumps, and W's cards are in a very bad position to win more than two sure tricks, which will leave it to S to win eight if they are to go game in hearts. E bid no-trumps, but S refused to accept him, as he wanted to score his 64 in honors. It would have been set if W opened the other major suit.

Owing to the position of the dummy, S could not win the game in hearts. E was the proper

player to accept as he was on the right side of the declarer to make his minor honors. A good player in E's position would have overcalled W's acceptance with a bid of three hearts, and S would have accepted E's bid as a warning that W was not as good a partner as E. E can make the game in hearts, even if W opens with a trump, because S can lead a club before exhausting the trumps. If W passes up the club, E will lead a trump.

It does not matter whether S plays the hand with E as acceptor, or E plays it with S for the dummy. The point is the position of the ace-jack and king-jack suits with regard to the strong trump hand.

DELAYED BIDS

It not infrequently happens that a player has a good bid, but that his position is such, between the bidder and acceptor on another declaration, that he cannot get it in. This is part of the luck of the game, but it is sometimes rather trying to the patience. Here is a hand in which the player sitting E was compelled to pass five times, although he was willing to bid four in hearts. The curious part of it is that he could have made four, and ran the risk of being set by bidding five, only to be overcalled in the end with five no-trumps.

♥ Q ♣ 10 6 4 3 ♦ Q J 7 6 ♠ 9 8 6 2	♥ A K 4 ♣ K Q 5 2 ♦ 9 8 ♠ Q J 10 5 <table border="1" style="margin: auto; border-collapse: collapse;"> <tr> <td style="width: 30px;"></td> <td style="width: 30px; text-align: center;">N</td> <td style="width: 30px;"></td> </tr> <tr> <td style="text-align: center;">W</td> <td style="width: 100px; height: 60px;"></td> <td style="text-align: center;">E</td> </tr> <tr> <td></td> <td style="text-align: center;">S</td> <td></td> </tr> </table>		N		W		E		S		♥ 10 9 8 5 3 ♣ 9 8 ♦ 5 2 ♠ A K 7 3
	N										
W		E									
	S										
	♥ J 7 6 2 ♣ A J 7 ♦ A K 10 4 3 ♠ 4										

S dealt and started with a diamond, accepted by W and overcalled by N with no-trump. This E passed, and he had to pass again and again while W continued to bid diamonds, accepted by S, and N continued to overcall the acceptance with no-trumps, also accepted by S, until W got tired and refused to go to four diamonds over three no-trumps, so E finally got in a bid of four hearts, which N accepted, S returning to no-trump and carrying it to five, which he made.

REFUSING TO ACCEPT

There is a great difference between a bid that is delayed for want of an opportunity to make it, and delaying a bid until some other player has accepted a bid that you might have accepted yourself.

While, as already pointed out, there is no great difference between being the bidder and the acceptor, so far as the score goes, there is always the risk that you will be neither if you are not quite sure of your ground.

Auction players are so accustomed to attaching the greatest importance to winning or saving the rubber, which makes a difference of 500 points in that game, that they usually fall into the error of devoting too much attention to the same object when they first take up pirate bridge.

In auction, the rubber is worth 250 to each of your opponents, but you lose to one only, which costs you 250. If you save it, you still have a chance to win that 250, because it does not matter whether you or your partner has the hand.

In pirate bridge these conditions do not exist.

The rubber is worth only 150 to the winner, as he gets 50 from three players, and he may be your partner and add some hundred or more points to your score, out of which you can well afford to pay your 50. But instead of having an even chance to win the rubber eventually yourself, as at auction, it is 3 to 1 against you, because only one of the four at the table can win it, and three others are striving against you for the privilege. If the others are a game in and you are not, it is 9 to 1 against you, or even more.

If you can get for a partner the player that you are afraid will win the rubber, and he does win it, you are in a much better position than if you were finally compelled to allow some other player to win it who did not want you for a partner, or found the bidder you refused picked up by some one else, leaving you to pay them both, instead of collecting from two players yourself.

Let us suppose that N and S are each a game in and that S eventually bids no-trump. The only player that can accept him is N, but he refuses to do so because S will win the game and rubber if he plays the hand. If no one accepts S's bid, it is void, and N can then bid no-trumps himself, get an acceptor, and win the rubber.

This sounds well, but the premises upon which such a proceeding is based are absolutely false. In the first place, who will accept N's no-trumper

if neither E nor W were able to accept S's? S certainly will not, as he will at once see through the scheme and force N to walk the plank.

Apart from the unimportant difference it makes in the score who wins the rubber, provided you are one of the partners, there is another element. If the bid is accepted, it will certainly not be left at one no-trump. Either E or W will inevitably call a five-card suit of some kind, hoping to secure for a partner whichever of the no-trump hands can best support that suit as a trump suit. Then the fight will probably develop between two-suit bids, the no-trumper being completely forgotten, and N having just as good a chance to secure the declaration or acceptance as S.

This shows that so far from running any risk in accepting S's no-trump bid, N would simply be getting things started. If they do not start, N adds a comfortable number of points to his score, even if he does not win the rubber himself. By accepting S's no-trump bid promptly, N shows both E and W that, if they have anything to declare, S is not the only pebble on the beach, and N is just as well able to help them along as S would be.

Here is one of the hands that came up when we were experimenting with this game. N and S had each a game in. E and W had not. The weakness of original no-trump bids had not then

been discovered, so that S's opening declaration is not a good one.

	♥ A K 7 2	
	♣ J 6	
	♦ A J 10 5	
	♠ A 8 3	
♥ 6		♥ J 10 9 4 3
♣ 10 8 5 4		♣ Q 9 2
♦ Q 7 4		♦ 9 6 3 2
♠ Q J 6 5 4		♠ 9
	N W E S	
	♥ Q 8 5	
	♣ A K 7 3	
	♦ K 8	
	♠ K 10 7 2	

S dealt and bid no-trump. When W passed, N also passed, so as to prevent S from winning the rubber. When E passed, S's bid was void. W bid a spade, both N and S refusing to accept it, as that would give W a game and put him on an equality with them for the rubber. W's bid being void, N bid no-trump, and of course no one would accept him. E saw that neither of them would accept anything, so he said nothing about the hearts, and the deal was thrown up, as S cannot bid again unless some bid has been accepted after his was refused.

On the next deal, as it happened, W made four

by cards in hearts with simple honors, with E for a partner, scoring 98 each. On the following deal, W made four by cards at no-trump and 30 aces, again finding an acceptor in E and scoring 170 for himself, 120 for E. This meant 486 points that N and S each had to pay, all because each was afraid the other would win the rubber.

Had N accepted S's no-trump bid on the hand just given, E would have bid two hearts, and no matter which accepted it, S or N, there would have been a two-spade bid from W. On account of his advantage in holding the ace of spades, N would prefer the hearts and would accept up to four. As the cards lie, E could have made four hearts, but W and S cannot make more than three in spades, as they must lose one trick in each of the four suits. This shows that N could have saved 228 points by accepting S's bid and then accepting E, even if W won the rubber in the next two deals.

An interesting feature of this hand is that if S is too anxious to shut out N, and accepts the heart bid, W at once bids the spades, and as that suits S better he would probably accept that, whereupon it would be open to N to bid the hearts, get E for an acceptor, and win the rubber. S and E could not make more than three in hearts, probably only two if N played well.

This scheming to be the declarer and not the

acceptor is one of the fine points of the game, and while it undoubtedly leads to some interesting and exciting situations, it can be touched upon only lightly in a book which is written professedly for the beginner, but one example of this part of tactics may not be amiss. N and S were each a game in.

	♥ A Q 10 9 6 2	
	♣ J 10 8 5 3	
	♦ 9 4	
	♠ —	
♥ 8 7 4 3	N W E S	♥ —
♣ A K 7 6		♣ Q 9 4 2
♦ 3		♦ A K Q 8 6 5
♠ J 10 6 2		♠ 9 5 3
	♥ K J 5	
	♣ —	
	♦ J 10 7 2	
	♠ A K Q 8 7 4	

S dealt and bid two spades, accepted by W, and N bid three hearts. S could have accepted this, but that would allow N to play the hand and win the rubber. W accepted the three hearts, and then E bid four diamonds. S could have accepted this, but his plan is to play the hand himself and win the rubber. The reader must remember that S can always make another bid, no

matter what happens, as long as three players do not pass an acceptance.

No one will accept E on the diamonds, and the bid returns automatically to three hearts, accepted by W, and it is S's turn. He bids three spades, which W accepts, and N bids four hearts, W accepting everything.

Now S sees that if he goes any further with the spades, W may refuse to accept, so he keeps the bidding open by offering five diamonds, knowing that E will jump at it. But the unexpected part of it was that when W went to five hearts and N accepted, E bid six diamonds, so as to prevent either N or S from winning the rubber. S accepted, and E made a grand slam by trumping the first heart, ruffing out the spade suit on the fourth round, after exhausting N's trumps, and discarding two clubs after S had trumped two of that suit. A spade opening would have saved one trick, but the contract would still have been safe.

REBIDDING THE HAND

After having made a bid and found an acceptor, the declaration is almost invariably overcalled, either by some player who wishes to break up the partnership and get the stronger half of it for himself, or by the player that has the other suit and does not care who accepts him. This brings up the question of increasing the first bid if the higher bid is accepted.

As a rule, it is not only better but safer, instead of bidding the same suit again, to bid the supporting suit if it is worth showing, even at the risk of being eventually forced to accept your first suit instead of playing it with an acceptor.

There is absolutely no risk in bidding the second suit, because no one will accept it unless it is unusually promising, but it gives the players a better line on the hand, and they can judge much better of your value as a partner. Several of the hands illustrated in this book show this feature in the second round of bids. In auction, to rebid the hand with a minor suit after having shown a major suit, indicates stronger trick-taking possibilities in the second suit than in the first.

In pirate bridge this is not the case; in fact, the conditions may be just reversed, but the opportunity to show one sure trick, or a possible two, may be valuable.

When the full strength of the hand has not been indicated by the first bid, there should be no hesitation about bidding the same suit again if you have found an acceptor on the first bid. This has the advantage of keeping the privilege of being the declarer in your own hand. It is usually when your first bid is not accepted, or your acceptor drops you on the second round, that you should brace him up a bit by calling your supporting suit. If he does not want you, some one else may.

Here is an example of good rebidding by one player and very bad rebidding by another:

	♥ Q	
	♣ 10 9 2	
	♦ 10 9 3 2	
	♠ K Q J 8 2	
♥ J 9 6 5 3	N W E S	♥ 7 2
♣ 5		♣ A J 8 7 3
♦ K Q J 7		♦ 8 5
♠ 10 6 5		♠ A 9 7 3
	♥ A K 10 8 4	
	♣ K Q 6 4	
	♦ A 6 4	
	♠ 4	

S bid a heart, accepted by W, and N bid a spade, accepted by E. Now S rebids his hand, two hearts, as he wants to play it and he has much more than the average heart strength. It would be a no-trumper but for the spades. W accepts again, showing that he has probably more than an average accepting hand. N bid two spades.

This is distinctly a bad bid. He has not the strength to justify rebidding the suit and should have declared the diamonds. E accepted, which is also bad bidding, as he has nothing unusual, and cannot trump anything until the third round. His ace-jack suit is on the wrong side of his partner to be of any value.

S went on to three hearts, W still accepting, and N stuck to the spades, E accepting. S doubled the three spades, feeling sure that W was assisting on diamond strength. This is a bad double, because it allows W to seize the opportunity to take up the bidding on hearts, and S has to accept him.

Had the double been allowed to stand, N would have been set for two tricks, less 36 in honors, which would have given S 328 points, as he would win 164 from both N and E; but the little slam that W made in hearts netted that player 360 and gave him a game toward the rubber.

SECONDARY BIDS

Enough has probably been shown in the preceding hands of how the bidding is likely to go after the first round to indicate to the reader that most of it depends on observation and inference. One must watch carefully the bids made by others, and consider the probable location of the dummy with regard to the declarer.

There is one point to which attention should be particularly directed in connection with secondary bids, and that is accepting a player who bids a suit, gets an acceptor and immediately goes to no-trumps. The inference is that the suit which he declared in the first place was his weakness, not his strength, and that he was feeling out its distribution before risking a no-trumper. Such bids are called, "one-try" no-trumpers.

Another time a player may bid two suits, find acceptors for each, and then go to no-trumps; or he may bid one, get an acceptor, and hear from the other by a bid made by some other player, and go no-trumps. These are called, "two-try" no-trumpers. The final no-trump bid shows that the position of the acceptors is satisfactory. If both suits are bid by the prospective no-trumper and both acceptances are made by the same player,

the rest is easy, but if they are accepted by different players, the position of the no-trumper with regard to each may be important.

As one-try no-trumpers are almost invariably made by bidding a suit in which the proposed no-trumper has little or nothing, players must be alert to overcall the acceptor if they also have tricks in the suit. This is a very important point in secondary bids, as it must be clear to any person of average intelligence that if one player has strength enough to accept, and another player has the high cards to accept if the first one did not, that the original bidder cannot have anything in the way of winning cards in that suit, and the bid is a palpable one-try for a no-trumper. Here is a good illustration of the situation:

	♥ 10 9 8 3	
	♣ Q 8 7	
	♦ K J 8 2	
	♠ 9 8	
♥ Q 4		♥ J 6 5 2
♣ K 5 2		♣ 9 4
♦ 9 7 5		♦ A Q 10 3
♠ A 10 7 5 2		♠ 6 4 3
	N W E S	
	♥ A K 7	
	♣ A J 10 6 3	
	♦ 6 4	
	♠ K Q J	

S dealt and bid a diamond. W passed and N accepted. E at once recognized this as a one-try no-trumper, and in order to be in on it himself he overcalled with two diamonds. As S would not accept, no one else dare do so, knowing the nature of S's hand, so that bid was void. Then S bid no-trumps, and E accepted, as N did not dare to do so. W could not find an acceptor for the spades. Of course S and E go game at no-trumps.

Here is a two-try no-trumper, the second bid being accepted by a different player from the first:

	♥ K J 10 2	
	♣ J 3	
	♦ 10 6 3	
	♠ K J 6 2	
♥ 8 4 3		♥ 9 6 5
♣ K Q 6 4 2		♣ 10 5
♦ 9 5		♦ A Q 7 2
♠ A 9 5		♠ Q 8 7 3
	N W E S	
	♥ A Q 7	
	♣ A 9 8 7	
	♦ K J 8 4	
	♠ 10 4	

S deals and bids a diamond, which E accepts. Now two clubs, which W accepts, N and E passing. As neither of these mentions the spades, S assumes

that suit is split up, and he bids two no-trumps, accepted by W. This is the better position for the acceptor, as S can get a lead through E's diamonds and up to his own tenace in hearts. Observe that if the diamonds were with W and the clubs with E, a no-trumper might not work so well.

As will be seen, it does not matter what Y leads, provided S takes full advantage of the position and leads diamonds from W's hand immediately. The harder opening from N's hand to meet would be the spade. W wins and leads a diamond. If E puts on the ace and leads a spade, three spade tricks do not save the game. If E leads a heart, instead of a spade, S must put up the ace and make two diamonds instead of two hearts.

If N opens with a heart, the game is easy for S, as the queen wins the first trick, dummy gets in with a club and leads a diamond. If E passes this up, the one diamond trick is all S wants, as the five clubs are good any time.

As will be seen in the chapter on doubling, further on, a player may indicate that the wrong hand has accepted by doubling the acceptance, which allows the no-trump hand to bid it at once, without waiting for any acceptance of a two-trick bid. In the first of the two hands just given, for instance, E might have doubled N's acceptance.

It has been found that good players can count up their losing tricks with remarkable accuracy,

and can locate the hand that is likely to trump a given suit. Some players are very good at judging upon what cards or which suit an acceptor is counting for tricks, even if neither of the minor suits have been named.

This is matter of practice and experience. The beginner will make a good many mistakes at first, of course, especially if he does not pay close attention to the difference between original or free bids and those that are probably forced. Here is an example of this error, due more to thoughtlessness than anything else:

	♥ Q 10 9 2	
	♣ A Q 5	
	♦ 9 3	
	♠ K 10 5 3	
♥ A 7 3		♥ 4
♣ K J 7 6 4		♣ 9 8 2
♦ 8 2		♦ A Q 6 5
♠ A 8 7		♠ Q J 9 6 4
	N W E S	
	♥ K J 8 6 5	
	♣ 10 3	
	♦ K J 10 7 4	
	♠ 2	

S dealt and passed, having no sure tricks in any suit for an original bid. When W passed, N bid no-trump, accepted by E. Now S bids two hearts, so as to get the no-trumper that is

best in that suit to accept him. W passes and N accepts. Now E bids two spades, which N also accepts. This induces S to try the other suit, bidding three diamonds, which E accepts.

All this time W has passed, but with his strength in the black suits and S bidding both the red suits, he argued that the combination should be a good no-trumper, in spite of the original bid and acceptance of N and E, so he bid three no-trumps.

N passed because he was afraid of the diamonds, and E passed because he was afraid of the hearts. S accepted, thinking W must have the clubs and a stopper in spades. The contract was set for four tricks. N led the king of his partner's declared suit, spades, and W could not drop the hearts, losing four spades, two clubs, a heart, and a diamond.

W's inferences were correct so far as S's suits were concerned, but he overlooked the fact that both were secondary bids, and made after S had a chance to make a free bid, so they must be without the tops, or sure tricks, that a free bid would have indicated.

S's bids are aimed at N on the hearts and at E on the diamonds. N has shown both hearts and spades and must have something in clubs to justify his bidding no-trumps. S can make four or five by cards at hearts with N for a partner. They

could even go game at no-trump, if W opened a small club and the ten won the first trick, as N must get in to lead the diamond through E's acceptance of that suit.

POSITION IN BIDDING

One of the most attractive features of pirate bridge is the exercise of judgment in counting up the number of tricks that you can contribute as your share of the contract when you accept, or when you bid with a definite acceptor in view. The value of your cards will vary with your position with regard to the partner who wants you, or the partner you want yourself. If you have both ace and king of two suits, they are probably worth just as much in one place as another, but there are other combinations that are greatly affected by their position.

If the bidder and acceptor sit opposite each other, all ace-queen suits, or king-jack suits, or guarded kings are simply a gamble. Anything but an ace can be led through and killed.

But if the player who holds such combinations sits on his partner's right they become absolutely certain tricks, because the partner can lead through both adversaries, and the player with the ace-queen suit has the drop. A king led up to in fourth hand in this way must win the second round at

the latest. A king-jack suit must be good for two tricks, if it can be led up to twice, no matter who holds the ace and queen. The only risk is that the adversaries will lead through before the partner can get in to lead up.

If such combinations as these are on the left of the partner, nothing but aces are sure tricks, as one or both adversaries must play after that hand. This shows that one of the fine points of the game lies in securing the position that will give your secondary cards their greatest trick-taking power, and when you hold tenaces, or guarded honors, the great thing is to be on your partner's right hand. You do not care which of you is the dummy, so that the lead can come from the left through both adversaries.

It is probably hardly necessary to point out to the experienced player that there must be a strong probability, if not a certainty, that the partner can get in often enough to make these leads.

While this part of the game may seem a little too deep for the beginner, as it involves the nicest calculations as to avoiding the partner that is not in the right position, and angling for one and one only (the one to your left), it may be interesting to give an example of how this part of the bidding tactics is carried out in practice. The following deal decided a rather important rubber, S having won the first game with a grand slam at no-trumps.

♥ 8 7 3 ♣ A 8 6 4 ♦ 9 8 3 ♠ A 8 5	♥ K J 10 9 5 ♣ Q 9 5 ♦ Q 7 ♠ 9 4 3	N W E S	♥ 6 ♣ 10 3 ♦ A J 10 6 4 2 ♠ K J 10 2
	♥ A Q 4 2 ♣ K J 7 2 ♦ K 5 ♠ Q 7 6		

Knowing the weakness of starting with a no-trump bid when the player is already a game in, S passed. W also passed and N bid a heart, which S accepted. W passed again, and E bid two diamonds, accepted by W.

Now when N bids two hearts, S refuses to accept, as he sees a better declaration ahead. This refusal to accept him the second time appears quite reasonable to N, as S apparently had not a bid on his own deal. No one accepting the two-heart bid, it is void, and returns to two diamonds by E accepted by W, with E having the privilege of bidding something else if he wishes to. He bid two spades, S passing and W accepting. When N and E both passed, S bid two no-trumps.

In order to appreciate S's bidding, the reader

must remember that a bidder can always shift, even if he is accepted, although his acceptor cannot. S is fishing for an acceptance from W, with E as second choice, as E has shown two strong suits. The partner S does not want is N, and if W passes and N accepts, S is ready to return at once to the hearts, because with N for a partner at no-trumps, there is only one sure trick in S's hand; with W for a partner there are four or five.

W did accept, and the play shows the immense advantage of position to hands of this character. N led the queen of E's declared suit, diamonds, and E led a second round, establishing four cards in his own hand, with all those spades for reentry.

On winning the second trick with the king of diamonds, S put dummy in with the ace of clubs and came back with a small one, winning the trick with the jack. The king of clubs dropped the queen, E discarding a spade. Then the eight of clubs won the seven, N discarding a spade and E a diamond. Dummy now leads a small heart and S wins with the queen.

The contract is now safe, but he wants the game and rubber, so he leads the ace of hearts and E sheds another diamond. This makes it easy to count the hands. N has three hearts left. E has either one diamond and four spades, or all the diamonds and only three spades. The fine

point of the calculation is that if N has a diamond to lead the game is impossible, as three hearts and a diamond save it. S leads the heart. That is the only chance to make two spades, and they win the game and rubber, after N has made his three hearts.

It is interesting to note that had N accepted S at no-trumps and been left with it, they would have been set for two tricks, as all S could make would be the king of diamonds and his five hearts. If he tried any other lead, he would be set for four tricks, as all the diamonds and four spades would make against him.

DOUBLING

There is probably no part of the game of auction that has cost the average or mediocre player so much money as doubling. One continually sees declarations win the game or rubber that would have been impossible without the double, and the biggest losses on record are always due to injudicious doubling or redoubling. The double is largely a gamble, and as such has no place in a supposedly intellectual game.

There are three classes of doubles recognized by good players. The sure double, when the opponent's contract is impossible, no matter how the cards lie. The free double, when the contract will go game whether it is doubled or not. The conventional double, to show control of a suit bid by an opponent. In addition to these there are to-day in use at auction certain doubles that show you have nothing in the suit you double, or that you have a no-trumper but do not want to play it. These are more or less in the class of private conventions.

In pirate bridge, there is only one double that

is of much use, and that is the double indicating that the wrong player has accepted. The so-called free double, which is a gamble on the contract not going game when it must do so to succeed, has no place in a game in which contracts are based on such a sure foundation as they are in pirate bridge.

The player who makes a free double in this game and finds he is mistaken will have to pay pretty heavily for his venture, even if he is not redoubled. Suppose he doubles four spades and the declarer just makes it. This will cost the doubler 344 points. If the declarer should happen to make an extra trick, it would cost 460, in addition to the honors as held.

To double simply because you think you can defeat the contract, would indicate that in your opinion the bidder has picked the wrong partner, and that you are strong enough to beat the combination. But if you are strong enough to beat two players, you should surely be strong enough to take the stronger of the two as your partner and beat the other. The double that invites this shift of partners is a good one.

So many hands are worth much more than they have to bid to get the contract that doubling is a very dangerous experiment unless it is a certainty. Some astonishing things happen at pirate bridge. Take this hand, in which E had what he considered a free double, if not a certainty.

the line, 18 for honors, 50 for game, and 100 for the contract and a trick over; total, 258, which E had to pay double, so it cost him 516.

It is perhaps hardly necessary to point out to the reader who has followed me thus far that the moment N stopped bidding the hearts, E should have bid five spades, overcalling W's acceptance of four. This would have netted him a grand slam in spades, with five honors, so that he would have won exactly the 516 points that he lost by doubling, and been a game in toward the rubber besides. It is a small slam in hearts for N and E if N will keep on—another instance of the two best combinations getting together.

If the player who is tempted to double says nothing, and it turns out that he can set the contract for even one trick, he gets 100 for it, as he wins 50 from two players. If he had doubled he would have got 100 more, but in order to get that 100 he risks anywhere from 344 to 600.

A very useful double at auction was when the second player overcalled a no-trumper with a long suit, and the third hand held two sure stoppers in that suit. The third hand doubled. The idea was to encourage the partner to go on with his no-trumper, if he really had one to start with, and also to prevent the success of a maneuver called "the shift."

There is no such situation possible in pirate

bridge. The no-trumper must be accepted before any one can bid a suit, and the suit must be accepted before it can be doubled. It is difficult to imagine such a bid being accepted against a no-trumper, when the one who is still the no-trumper's partner (by elimination) has two sure stoppers in that suit; but that is not the point.

When a no-trumper is accepted, the suit is not bid against it, as at auction, but is declared in the hope that the no-trump hand will accept it. If this happens, what does the player with the two stoppers hope to accomplish by doubling?

In all my experience of the game I have never seen a good double. In every case the doubler should have played the hand, or should have been the acceptor, at an early stage of the bidding, of the one that did play it.

TAKING STINGS

There is one element of the bidding that will probably not be thoroughly understood until we have had at least a year's experience with pirate bridge, and that is the advisability of taking stings in order to prevent an opponent from scoring over you, or to save the game or rubber.

Auction players have arrived at a fixed valuation for a lost game, which they consider worth about 200 points, while the rubber game is worth about 300. Many players consider it a good investment to sacrifice these amounts in penalties, in order to save one or the other; the game, or both game and rubber. This they accomplish by overbidding their hands and assuming a contract that they know is hopeless. They are banking on the chance of winning the game or rubber themselves later. That the game they are looking forward to might help them to win the next rubber does not seem to occur to them. Neither have they any clear idea of the odds in favor of their losing their penalties and the rubber as well.

In pirate bridge, while there is no such value attached to the rubber as the 250 points at auction, the loser has to pay double, so that if he is not one of the partners to win the rubber game he will have to pay one man 50 and the other 100. If it is not the rubber game, he may have to pay for three by cards at no-trump and 30 aces, with 50 for game, and to pay it to two different players, so that it will cost him 220. If he was doubled and set two tricks in his efforts to escape this, he would have to pay 200 to two players, so that it would cost him 400. If there is anything in figures, this would suggest that he should never risk being set more than one trick, as it is cheaper to lose the rubber.

In pirate bridge, one must get a partner to share the risk if one overbids one's hand. If he is willing to take a sting, all the strength must be in the two opposing hands and he must have abandoned all hope of getting either of them for a partner. If you cannot get a partner to join in the sacrifice of anywhere from 200 to 800 points, the only resource is to attach yourself to the player who does not want you for a partner, and carry him down to destruction with you.

This is, of course, a plausible way of saving the game, when you see that a certain partnership will win it. Accept one of the two players you are afraid of, so that the one he had hoped to get

for a partner shall play against him. But all that was thought of when the rules for the game were being drawn up, and the ease with which such a scheme can be frustrated has already been pointed out. No matter where the pirate may sit who wants to scuttle the ship, the one he takes prisoner waits until his intended partner bids an extra trick and then accepts him, allowing the interloper to walk the plank.

If a weak contract is deliberately undertaken by two players at pirate bridge, and set for two tricks, doubled, it will cost the losers 400 points each, instead of the 200 they would lose at auction where only one adversary has to be settled with. Instead of the player having an even chance to win the rubber if he takes the sting to save the game, it is three to one against him.

Let us suppose that he does win the rubber game after being stung to get the opportunity. Call it three no-trumps and 30 aces, with 50 for the game and 50 rubber points added. That is 160, won from two players, total 320, for which he has risked being set 400 or perhaps 600, when he could have taken the same chance at a cost of not more than 220 by letting some one play the hand in peace. Then the big hand that is hoped for will be the first game on the new rubber, if it is not in time to win this one.

So far as my personal experience goes, I have

never found the auction system of overbidding one's hand in order to save a game to be worth the investment, even at that game. At pirate, it is sheer folly.

THE NULLO

The nullo is a declaration at no-trumps to lose tricks, and the number of tricks bid is the number the nullo player undertakes to force upon his opponents, in spite of their efforts not to win them. That is, a bid of four nullos means that they will win four tricks over the usual book of six. There are no honors, and the tricks are worth ten points each, the bid ranking between spades and no-trumps.

Although this bid has been anathema among the better class of auction players, chiefly because no one could devise any intelligible system of bidding it, and because there was no retreat from disaster if it did not suit the partner's hand, there seems to be no reason why it should not be introduced in pirate bridge if the four players at the table like the declaration, and think they know how to play it; which is a very rare accomplishment, by the way.

When the nullo was attempted as a part of the game of auction, it was a guess game, pure and simple. If a player holds the seven top hearts he

is absolutely sure of seven tricks if hearts are trumps, or at no-trumps, no matter what his partner lays down for the dummy. But if he holds thirteen cards, all below the five, there is no certainty about how many tricks he will lose if he bids a nullo, because his dummy may be forced to take home any number from one to a dozen. Once the bid is made, there is no escape, unless the partner overcalls with a contract that is equally doomed to failure, on account of the weakness of the hand that bid the nullo.

Even when the player passed without a bid at auction, it was unsafe for his partner to bid a nullo unless it was almost perfect, as so many hands that have no sound declaration in them for a free bid are still much too strong for nullo.

If the game is pirate bridge, there is not the slightest risk in bidding a nullo, because only the player whose cards are eminently suited to that declaration will accept you. It frequently happens that two hands are so strong in the major suits or no-trumps, that neither of the others has a chance against them. In such cases the only defense is the nullo, which, if it has no other result, may push the strong hands just a trick beyond their depth. With fair cards in a minor suit, not enough to bid more than a trick or two, a nullo may offer a means of escape from a powerful adversary. Take this situation:

	♥ Q 10 5	
	♣ 10 5	
	♦ A K Q	
	♠ K J 9 4 3	
♥ J 9 4		♥ 8 5 3 2
♣ A 7 6 4 2		♣ K Q J 8
♦ 6 3 2		♦ J 10 9 4
♠ 5 2		♠ 6
	N W E S	
	♥ A K 7	
	♣ 9 3	
	♦ 8 7 5	
	♠ A Q 10 8 7	

S deals and bids a spade, accepted by N. Then E and W may bid the clubs, which is their only hope, but N and S would continue to press the spade until E and W had to submit or be doubled and set just as many tricks as their contract called for. The only resource for W would be to bid the nullo.

This hand is good for five by cards in whichever major suit N and S choose to select. It is equally good for five nullo, which will overcall five spades or hearts, if E and W have the courage to go so far.

Small cards, singletons, and two-card suits are the strongest elements in nullo. If the acceptor has low cards in two suits, but only intermediates in the others, he may be pretty sure that the nullo

bidder has the small cards in those apparently dangerous suits. The one thing that the nullo player should be warned against is a long suit without the deuce. The rest of his hand is stripped, and then he is thrown into the lead with this suit by the player who holds back the deuce of it to the last.

PLAYING NULLOS

The great art in playing nullos is to get discards, and to drop the high cards on tricks two at a time. It is astonishing how many aces and kings may be got rid of in this way.

The usual rule when playing with or against a nullo is to lead the higher of two cards, the intermediate of three, and lowest of four, but never to touch "safe" suits—suits in which you cannot be compelled to take a trick, no matter how the lead comes.

The same rules might be applied to the play of the second hand, but whether to go up or "duck" is largely matter of judgment.

As an example of the possibilities of nullo hands, take this situation, in which eleven of the twenty-six cards held by the partners are higher than the eight, among them being three tens, two jacks, three queens, a king and an ace, added to which they play the declaration with the worst possible position of the dummy, opposite the declarer.

	♥ 7 4 3	
	♣ K 9 6	
	♦ J 9	
	♠ A J 9 7 4	
♥ Q 9 5 2		♥ J 10
♣ A 10 7 5		♣ Q J 8 4 3 2
♦ 7 4 2		♦ 10 8
♠ 8 3		♠ K Q 2
	N W E S	
	♥ A K 8 6	
	♣ —	
	♦ A K Q 6 5 3	
	♠ 10 6 5	

S dealt and bid two diamonds, which no one accepted. That bid being void, W passed and N bid a spade. E passed and S accepted. Then E bid two clubs accepted by W. When N went back to the spades and S accepted, E shifted to the nullo, and they carried it to four, which frightened S back to the diamonds. This is good bidding, as there are five tricks in diamonds in the hand, but only four in spades, but no one would accept the diamond contract at five and neither N nor S would go to five spades, so it was played at four nullo.

Now look how E and W get rid of those eleven high cards and win the game, making their contract. S led the interior spade six, W played the eight, and E won it with the king. The next lead

was the jack of hearts, underplayed by dummy with the nine when S played small, so as to win the ten of hearts with the queen and discard the queen of spades on the five of hearts, W holding up the deuce.

There is no escape from this attack. If S wins either the first or second lead of hearts and tries another spade, E wins it and leads the deuce of spades after getting rid of the second heart (if he still holds it). E and W can make four nullos against any defense N and S may offer.

The nullo is a very interesting declaration, but it requires great powers of memory and observation to play it well, the trick being to take your medicine early in the hand and not to try to get rid of the lead too quickly. Those opposed to the nullo should do their best to give the partner discards and prevent discards from the dummy. The object in leading short suits is to discard the dangerous cards in other suits.

It is a game with great possibilities in skilful hands, but should be used only as a defense, never as an original bid for attack. About the third round of the bids, when the declaration has got up to three tricks, is about the time for a nullo bid.

PLAYING THE HANDS

There are certain conventional leads and plays that every person should be familiar with before cutting into anything but the domestic rubber. The best way to secure a thorough knowledge of these conventions is to take a pack of cards and sort out a suit with which to go through the combinations. The actual cards in the hand soon accustom the eye to the ones that require to be led or played in a certain way.

The declarer always has a great advantage in seeing exactly what his partner is capable of. In pirat  bridge he has the additional advantage, about twice out of every three times, of having the dummy next him and leading through both adversaries. Tenaces are most valuable in case they are on the right.

It is probably hardly necessary to tell the reader that a tenace is the best and third-best of a suit in which you do not hold the second-best. The ace and queen of a suit is a familiar example. A minor tenace is the king and jack. A fourchette is the combination in one hand, or between the

two hands, of the cards just above and below the one led. If a queen is led and one hand holds king and the other the jack, with others, that is a fourchette over the queen. Both king and jack in one hand are the same thing, of course. An imperfect fourchette is the card above and the one next but one below; such as queen and nine over a jack led.

The first thing that the beginner should study in the play of the hands is the correct card to lead from any combination. If the partner has bid a suit, it is usual to lead that, unless you have an ace-king suit yourself which you have not mentioned in the bidding. In that case, show your two winning cards by leading the king. Hold the ace and lead his suit, and he will know where he can put you back into the lead at any time, or will have a suit that he can safely unguard.

It is usual to lead the best card you hold of your partner's suit, because he does not care much about number as a rule, but wants to know exactly what high cards are out against him, so that he may calculate what is to be expected from that suit.

If your partner has not named any suit, lead your own, whether you have declared it or not. If the winning declaration is a trump suit, and you do not lead your own suit after bidding it,

or your partner's suit, if he has bid one, the card you do lead should be an absolute singleton, showing you want to make a little trump ruffing.

All short-suit and singleton openings are dangerous, however, unless you can stop the trump lead before your trumps are all exhausted, and try something else, in case your partner could not win and return your singleton.

There are three principal plays, purely conventional, which should be mastered in all their variations:

1. The card to lead, which shows what high cards are out against the leader in that suit. If these are not exposed in the dummy, nor in the hand of the partner, the declarer must have them.

2. The two principal echoes, one with a trump suit, the other at no-trump. These show how many of the suit remain in the hand when the partner leads and sometimes tell just what the high cards are. Returning the partner's suit is a sort of echo.

3. The discards, which indicate possible tricks in suits that have not yet been led, or direct the partner to keep some other suit, so that you may protect both between you.

In playing against a trump declaration, the object is to get home all the tricks you can, and especially to make sure of saving the game, if it can be saved. Against no-trumpers, your long

suits cannot be ruffed, and the aim is to get them established before you lose your reentry cards in other suits, if you have any.

SELECTING THE SUIT

In playing against trump declarations, length in a suit is of no value unless you are long in trumps yourself, which never happens at pirate bridge among good players. Against a no-trumper, length may be valuable. In pirate bridge it is very seldom indeed that you can hope to run down a long suit against a no-trumper, as you can at auction, because the players will not accept such a bid until they are pretty sure they have every suit stopped between them.

It is bad policy to lead away from tenace suits or from suits headed by single honors. The best leads are from suits that contain two touching honors. If you should be lucky enough to find yourself with four trumps, it is bad policy to lead a singleton, if you have a good suit, because if you can get a force on the strong trump hand and he had only five trumps to start with, you may outlast him, and bring in your suit. The situation is unlikely at pirate, but in auction it is not uncommon for an adversary to have as many trumps as the declarer, or even more.

It is usually bad play to select a suit headed by

winning cards when you are playing against a no-trumper, unless there are at least three honors in it. A long weak suit may be established by leading it first, and keeping the high cards in the other suit for reentries.

SELECTING THE CARD

The correct card to lead from any combination is one of the most important things in the game, because every card shows to the partner the position of certain other cards. If the leader denies them, the leader's partner can place them to a certainty, as he always sees the dummy and his own hand.

The high card that is led more often than any other is the king. This lead is governed by the simple rule that it must always be accompanied by the card next it in value; that is, the ace or the queen, or both.

The only occasions upon which a player will lead the ace and follow with the king is when he has no more and is both ready and willing to ruff a third round, having no other use for those high cards. That is, they are not wanted for reentries.

When a king is led against a no-trumper, there should be at least three honors in the suit, or the suit so long that to lead a smaller card would be unsafe, such as six or seven to the king-queen.

These three honors would be A K Q, or K Q J, or A K J, or A K 10, or K Q 10.

The ace always denies the king. It may be led from three honors, such as A Q J, or A J 10, or from a suit of five or more against a trump. Against a no-trumper the ace is led from any suit of seven or more, even with the king behind it, to induce the partner to get out of the way on the first trick. With short suits headed by the ace, it is better to hold that card back and lead some other suit.

The lead of a queen or jack denies any higher cards in that suit, and should always be backed up by the card next below it. Against a trump the queen may be led from queen-jack and others. Against a no-trumper it should not be led without the ten as well as the jack, or the nine and at least five in suit.

Against a no-trumper the queen is often led from A Q J and others when there is not another trick in the hand. The object is to get the king out of the way at once, and at the same time to leave the partner with one of the suit to return if he gets in. Jack is sometimes led from A J 10 for the same reasons.

The card to lead from any suit that is not headed by two or more touching honors and which is not the suit your partner has declared, is the fourth best, counting from the top. From such a suit

as K 10 6 5 2, for instance, lead the five. Some players do not care for this lead except against no-trumpers, as they think showing number unimportant, when there is a trump suit.

Two-card suits, unless they are supporting honors, such as queen and jack, are very bad opening leads, because the partner cannot read them, and does not know what to do with them. If there is no singleton in the hand, a three-card suit is better than one of two only, or even the lowest of four to an honor. It is important for the partner to know that if you open a weak suit from the top, such as a nine, you can either trump the second round or cannot trump it at all.

SECONDARY LEADS

Having indicated in a general way the combination of cards from which you have made the opening lead, you can go into details on the second round, denying certain cards while indicating others. The first maxim of secondary leads is never to tell your partner anything he already knows.

Having led the king and won the trick, your partner knows you have the ace, but he does not know whether you have the queen. If you have, lead it for the second round of the suit. If you follow with the ace you tell him you have not the

queen, so the declarer must hold it if it is not in the dummy.

Having led the king from K Q J, follow with the jack, whether your king wins the trick or not. Your partner knows you have the queen if the king loses, but he does not know you have the jack. If the ace is held up, but wins your jack, he places the queen with you. If the ace is still held up he knows it, because from A K Q you would follow the king with the queen, not the jack. The jack denies the ace. If you do not follow with the jack, he knows the lead is from K Q 10, or from K Q and small cards.

When you lead the king from K Q and small cards, and the king wins the first trick, follow with your original fourth-best and let your partner make the ace, unless you have reason to suppose that the declarer is holding up ace and jack for what is known as the Bath coup. From K Q 7 6 2, for instance, follow a winning king with the six.

Having led the ace from three honors, follow with the next highest card. That is to say: lead ace then queen from A Q J; or ace then jack from A J 10. If you have only one honor behind the ace, or none, follow with the fourth-best. From A J 8 6 3, follow the ace with the six.

Follow the queen with the jack if you have not the ten. Follow with the ten if you have led the queen first from Q J 10 and others. If you

lead the jack as the top of a weak suit, follow with the next higher card.

Players do not agree on the best lead from K J 10, some preferring the ten, some the fourth-best. The lead should be avoided altogether if possible, as it is one of the worst combinations to lead away from that can be held. Against a trump declaration, if the suit must be opened, it is better to lead the ten. Against a no-trumper, the fourth-best (the card just below the ten, whatever it is). Having forced the queen with the ten, lead either of the two that are now second- and third-best for the second round, so as to force the ace.

Never forget to lead one of two equals on the second round of a suit, especially if they are the second- and third-best. This insures you against losing the trick to anything but the best of the suit. For example: having led the fourth-best from Q 10 6 5 2, your partner's jack falling to the king, lead the queen or ten next time, so as to be sure of forcing the ace and remaining with the best of the suit in your own hand.

THE PARTNER

The play of the third hand, or of the second hand if both adversaries of the declaration sit together, varies according to the declaration, trumps or no-trumps, and according to the position of the dummy. The opening lead is made in the dark, the partner sees dummy before he plays.

Against a trump, the chief thing is to show whether or not you can ruff the third round of your partner's suit. Against a no-trumper it is to show how many cards you hold in your partner's suit and what the high ones are, at the same time getting out of the way of his long suit. The trouble with many players is that their play means one thing at one time and something else at another. This is fatal to success.

When a small card is led, one of the most important rules is for the partner to win the trick as cheaply as possible. One should never pay a dollar for a trick that can be had for fifty cents.

Holding two touching honors, such as king and queen, for instance, to play the king on your partner's lead denies the queen, and marks that

card as with the declarer. Holding queen and ten, if the dummy is between the leader and third hand, and the jack is in the dummy, the ten should be played; not the queen, if dummy does not put on the jack. To play the queen would be to deny the ten.

When the partner makes no attempt to win the trick, his play is confined to indicating what he holds in that suit. This is called an echo, and these echoes are of two kinds.

THE TRUMP ECHO

When playing against a trump declaration, if the leader's partner holds only two cards of the suit led, neither as high as the jack, and makes no attempt to win the trick, he should play the higher card first, so that when the second and smaller card falls, his partner shall know he has no more and can ruff the third round. This is called the down-and-out echo, and is used only against a trump.

Suppose the partner holds the seven and four, a king led. The play to the king is the seven. The leader must hold ace or queen and will win the second round, on which the four falls. If he has both ace and queen he can lead a small card for the third round and let his partner ruff, or he can lead the winning card and get a discard, which may direct him which suit to lead next.

Some players use this echo to encourage the partner to continue the suit. If they hold the Q 7 4, for example, they will play the seven and then the four to show they can win the third round with the queen. This is sometimes very confusing, because the leader does not know whether his partner can make a little trump, or whether the declarer will ruff the queen and get into the lead, sometimes with great advantage to the declaration.

It is never necessary to use this echo when either of the two cards is as high as the jack, because when the high card falls, the partner is marked with the next higher or none. But if the jack is played first from jack and another, the leader will place the queen or no more in that hand and may lose a valuable trick by leading a small card, under the impression that his partner can win it, either with the queen or with a trump.

THE NO-TRUMP ECHO

When the declaration is no-trump, and the leader's partner makes no attempt to win the trick, no matter where he sits, the rule is to play the second-best, regardless of number or value. The partner may make no attempt to win the trick for either of two reasons: The leader's card may be high enough for that purpose, or the dummy

may be second hand and play a card that the third hand cannot win.

This rule is based on the theory that the leader is longer in the suit than his partner and it is always important at no-trumps for the hand that is shorter in the suit to get out of the way. The declarer will try to hold his high cards as long as possible, so as to block the suit. The leader's partner should do just the opposite, and should try to get rid of his high cards as quickly as possible.

This unblocking process, for that is what it is, must be followed up by always keeping the smallest card of three or more to the last. Suppose a king is led and the partner holds 10 8 2. He plays the eight on the king, because that is his second-best. The ten is given up on the next trick, no matter who leads the suit or wins the trick, keeping the unblocking deuce until the last. Even with equal cards the echo should be played in this way. Holding 8 7 6, play the seven and then the eight.

If there are four in the suit, such as 10 8 6 2, the second-best of those remaining must be played to the second trick; first the eight, then the six. This "playing down" marks the partner with the smallest still in hand, and one above the first card played.

This system is called the Foster echo, and aims

to give the leader two distinct points about his partner's hand, at the same time exposing any false cards played by the declarer. In the first place the echo indicates number. If the first card played must be the smallest held there can be only one more in the partner's hand. If there are three, the suit is played up. If more than three, it is played down, as already explained.

In the second place, this echo shows that there cannot be more than one card in the partner's hand higher than the one he plays. Suppose the lead is a queen, from Q J 10, and the partner drops the nine, the trick being won by the ace. The partner is absolutely marked with the king, or no more. Had he played a smaller card than the nine, the declarer might be false-carding with both ace and king.

The partner should never attempt to win a trick with a card that is not the best he holds, or in sequence with it. This is explained in the chapter on finesse.

THE ELEVEN RULE

When the opening lead is a high card, it belongs to one or other of the high-card combinations explained in the chapter on leading, the exact one being indicated by the second lead from the same suit. But when the opening lead is a small card,

or fourth-best, it gives no indication of the exact denomination of the three higher cards in hand, but there is one thing that the lead of a fourth-best does show. This is the exact number of cards, higher than the one led, that are out against the leader somewhere round the table.

There is no possible way of showing your partner that you are leading the seven from K 10 8 7 2, but you can tell him that as soon as he can locate any four cards higher than the seven, the three others are in the leader's hand.

This is accomplished by the eleven rule, which I invented away back in the early 80's, for the benefit of whist players. The rule is this:

Deduct the spots on the card led from eleven, and the difference is the number of cards, higher than the one led, that are not in the leader's hand.

Taking the example just given, the lead of the seven from K 10 8 7 2, the partner takes 7 from 11 and finds the remainder 4. Dummy has laid down the Q 9 4, and the partner holds A J 5. If the dummy is between the leader and his partner and does not cover the seven, that card will hold the trick, as all four cards required by the eleven rule are in sight.

Another example. The lead is the eight, and the partner is second hand, declarer third hand, and dummy fourth hand. The partner holds the Q 10 4, and sees the A 5 in the dummy. Deduct-

ing the eight, led, from eleven, he finds the three cards higher than the eight are all in sight, therefore the leader must have the K J 9 still in hand.

The reader should take a pack of cards, sort out a suit, and satisfy himself that this rule is infallible provided the card led is always the fourth-best, counting from the top. A player who is alert may sometimes make great use of this eleven rule in connection with inferences from the bids, especially when playing against no-trumpers. Take this situation:

	♥ 10 7 6 2	
	♣ Q 8 4	
	♦ 8 6 4	
	♠ A J 9	
♥ 9 5		♥ A K 8 3
♣ J 6 3		♣ A 5 2
♦ Q J 10 9 2		♦ A K
♠ K 6 5		♠ 10 8 3 2
	N W E S	
	♥ Q J 4	
	♣ K 10 9 7	
	♦ 7 5 3	
	♠ Q 7 4	

S dealt and passed. W and N both passed, and E bid no-trumps, which S did not accept because he was on the wrong side. W accepted, all passed,

and S led the seven of clubs. Dummy played small and N read that the declarer, E, could have only one card higher than the seven, as three of the four, indicated by the eleven rule, are in sight, dummy's jack, N's queen and eight. E must have the other, and that card must be the ace or the king, because if S had held both those cards he would have had two sure tricks in clubs, and would have bid a club on his own deal.

On the strength of this inference N plays the four of clubs and the ace wins the trick. Now observe the difference this initial play makes in the result. With the queen of clubs held over the jack, it is impossible for E to make more than six tricks, because there is no way to get dummy into the lead with the established diamond suit after the ace and king are out of the way.

Had N played the queen of clubs on the first trick, without stopping to apply the eleven rule to the situation, and considering the absence of any bid from S, E could have led through the clubs and made a trick with the jack, either on the second round or the third. This would have brought in three more diamonds and won the game, instead of which E is set for 50 points.

Incidentally, the reader's attention may be called to the mistake made by E in bidding no-trump without feeling his way. If he starts with the spade, in which he has not a trick, and either

S or W accepts him, N will double. With N for a partner E goes game at no-trump.

As we shall see when we come to the declarer's play, he has a great advantage in being able to foresee and prepare for certain positions that will not arise until later in the play. He sees the cards in each hand. His opponents have to infer the cards in each other's hands. In this process their chief reliance must be on the eleven rule, and it is remarkable to what uses it may sometimes be put. Here is a case in which it not only saved a game but set the contract. The hand is interesting also as showing how the opponents may sometimes borrow a little piece of strategy from the tactics that are usually considered peculiar to the declarer and dummy.

	♥ 10 7 6 2	
	♣ J 8	
	♦ A 8 7 2	
	♠ 7 4 2	
♥ Q 8 3		♥ J 9 4
♣ K 10 9 7 5 3 2		♣ A
♦ 6		♦ K Q J 10 3
♠ K 6		♠ 10 9 8 3
	N W E S	
	♥ A K 5	
	♣ Q 6 4	
	♦ 9 5 4	
	♠ A Q J 5	

S started with a spade, accepted by E. Then W bid three clubs, not on a solid suit, as this is not an original or free bid, but to show that he could attend to the trump situation and wanted tricks in other suits to help him out. No one accepted, so that bid was void.

As S was the bidder and not the acceptor, he had the right to bid again, and he rightly inferred that if W had all the clubs, and S held two sure tricks in hearts himself, E must have accepted his spade bid on the diamonds, so S bid no-trumps, as he could stop the clubs if W led them. W did not read the situation, and accepted, and to pull himself out of it S bid two no-trumps. This little hint caused W to drop out, and E accepted.

W led the seven of clubs, and E's cards were put down. Without stopping to apply the eleven rule, but seeing the lone ace of clubs in E's hand, N played the eight, and S went game on the hand by establishing the diamonds and refusing to cover the jack of clubs with the queen, which was the only chance, as S knows he is lost if N has another club to lead. N had no more and tried the hearts.

The king won the trick and four diamond tricks made, on which W had to discard clubs, or lose his queen of hearts or king of spades. Reading the situation, S led two rounds of spades, and after W had made his one remaining club, S won

the rest of the tricks, with the ace of hearts and jack of spades.

The moment the seven of clubs was led, N should have counted only four higher out against his partner. He has two (J 8). Dummy has one. The declarer must have one. If that is the king, N cannot do anything, but if it is the queen, N must prepare the tenace position for his partner by giving up the jack.

Had he done this he could have led the eight of clubs on getting in with the ace of diamonds, and whether S covered the eight or not would have made no difference. W will win the trick and run down the suit, leaving S with only six tricks on a contract to win eight.

THE DISCARD

Every player of experience has his own theory about discarding, but the simplest rule for the beginner is to discard the suit he is not afraid of, if he is fortunate enough to have such a thing. If the declaration is no-trump and one of the opponents has three clubs to the jack, and five diamonds to the ace-king, he may be pretty sure it is not the diamonds that the declarer will attack after he is done with the suit he is leading, on which this opponent has to discard. Keep the clubs. Three to a jack has stopped many a long suit. Let go the diamonds. The ace and king are probably all you can make.

It is often important to keep at least one of the partner's suit to lead to him, if there is any hope of getting in. It is dangerous to blank an ace or discard the last of a suit, as it may betray the partner's hand.

Discarding weak suits is a fatal error. Queen in one hand, jack in the other, will stop any suit, if either card is twice guarded. Remember that axiom. Take this situation:

PIRATE BRIDGE

	♥ A 9 8 7 4 3	
	♣ 9 8 5 3	
	♦ Q 3	
	♠ A	
♥ 5		♥ Q J 6
♣ Q J 6 4 2		♣ 10
♦ K 8 5		♦ J 6 4
♠ 9 6 4 2		♠ K Q J 7 5 3
	N W E S	
	♥ K 10 2	
	♣ A K 7	
	♦ A 10 9 7 2	
	♠ 10 8	

S dealt and bid a club, accepted by W. Then N bid hearts, accepted by E, S bidding no-trump, accepted by W. When N bids two hearts, E passes, as he wants to bid the spades and get the no-trumper to accept him, but when all passed the heart and E did bid the spades, S refused, preferring to play the hand himself, at no-trump, which he did, as W accepted the spade bid, leading S to believe he had that suit stopped. W accepted S's final bid of two no-trumps.

N led the ace of spades and then a low heart, as E had accepted him on hearts, but S won the jack with the king and proceeded to make five clubs. On the clubs E discarded one small diamond and then two small spades, so as to keep the queen and one heart for reentry. The second

diamond discard did no harm, as the first was enough, S making five diamond tricks and winning the game, five by cards.

If E throws away all his spades but the king, keeping the suit he is afraid of, he must make a club, a spade, and two more hearts, saving the game.

THE REVERSE DISCARD

This is sometimes useful when the partner may be in doubt what to keep or what to lead. If the player who has a discard holds a suit with an ace in it and has two smaller cards, such as the eight and four, by discarding the eight and then the four he can show the sure trick. Some players make a distinction between completing the echo or reverse discard in this way, and stopping after they have thrown any card as high as a seven. To stop means a probable trick; to complete the reverse echo, a certain trick.

SECOND HAND PLAY

The most concise rule for the second hand on any trick, when a small card is led through him, is to play a high card when he holds any combination from which he would lead a high card if he were leading that suit.

With ace king and others, for instance, the card to lead would be one of the high ones, the king. Then the king should be played second hand if a small card is led through.

The beginner should clearly understand the meaning of the terms, "leading through," and "leading up to." If you hold the ace and queen of a suit in which the king has not been played, and you do not know where that king is, you are led through if one of your opponents has to play after you, as he may have the king. If your partner is on your right and leads, you are led through, as both opponents have to play after you.

But if you are the last player on the trick, the suit is led up to you, not through you. If dummy is exposed on your right and it is your lead, you

are leading up to dummy. If the declarer is on your left, you are leading through the declarer.

The only difference between leading a suit and playing a high card when it is led through you, is that you try to win the trick as cheaply as possible when you are not the leader. Holding king and queen, for instance, you would lead the king, but if you are second hand on a small card led you would play the queen, just as you would if you were third hand and your partner led the suit.

With queen jack and only one small card, the jack should always be played second hand if a small card is led through, but with two small cards many players consider it safe to pass when playing against a no-trumper, as the opponent who is still to play will hardly finesse against two such cards, and two tricks may be made with the queen and jack after the king and ace are played.

Cover an honor with an honor is an excellent rule if you are short in the suit, because it forces the opponent who leads an honor through you to play another honor from his partner's hand to win the trick. The most common situation is when a player leads a queen or a jack to a king or ace. If the second hand covers the jack with the queen, the third hand must play the king, otherwise he would allow the jack to win. This cover may make a ten, or even a nine, good in the

hand of the partner, on account of the number of higher cards expended to win the first trick.

When the dummy is opposite the declarer, a good rule for the second hand, with the dummy on his left, is to be sure that dummy does not win the trick with an inferior card. As already explained, a good player will lead from an ace to a queen in his partner's hand. If the declarer leads a small card to a queen in his dummy, and the second hand holds the king, it is usually better to make sure of the trick at once, or the declarer may ruff the third round if he can win the first with dummy's queen and the second with his own ace.

The beginner is too apt, however, to imagine that a dummy on the left should be forced to play high cards by putting on high cards second hand, when no high card is led through. This is a serious mistake, because the dummy must play the high card no matter what the second player does, or lose the trick.

One often sees a beginner put a king on second hand so as to force dummy to play the ace, when dummy would have to play the ace anyhow, or allow the fourth player to win the trick with a ten or a jack. It is only when the second hand holds two or more high cards in sequence that one should be played on a small card led.

The second hand should always cover with a

fourchette, which is the card above and the card below the one led through. Let us suppose a ten is led, and second hand holds jack and nine. This is a fourchette, and the jack should be played on the ten, no matter what the cards in the third hand may be, unless they are such that they must be played, such as the ace or queen and no smaller cards.

One of the most common faults with the beginner in second-hand-play is called finessing against his own partner. Let us suppose dummy on the right, the declarer on the left, and a small card led from dummy, the second hand holding ace queen and small. The only correct play is the small card or the ace, because if the queen is played, and the king is on the left, the queen is thrown away. If the king is with the partner, he can attend to the trick without any assistance from the second hand. If both ace and queen are held, they effectually block that suit, therefore the ace should be played only when the trick is important, such as the one that saves the game.

It is usually a mistake to play false cards second hand, as it deceives no one but the partner. To put on the ace second hand, holding both ace and king, leads the partner to believe the king is with the declarer. The declarer knows perfectly well he does not hold it, and usually does not care which adversary has it.

RETURNING SUITS

After the opening lead, the original leader may get in himself on another suit and continue his suit, or his partner may get into the lead, and it will then be a question of returning the suit first opened by his partner, or leading one of his own.

In returning the partner's suit, the general rule is to lead the higher of only two remaining and the lowest of three. But this rule is continually modified by the cards exposed in the dummy, if that hand is on your partner's left, and the declarer is on your left. In returning a partner's suit in this situation, one should always beat dummy.

Take this situation, which is typical of many deals. A small club was led originally. Dummy put down the 9 3 only. Third hand held Q 10 7 2, losing the queen to the ace. The third hand gets in on another suit. If the lowest of three remaining is returned, it will be the deuce, and it will take the partner's king to shut out dummy's nine, leaving the declarer with the jack. If the ten had been returned, under the rule always to

beat dummy, the declarer's jack would have been caught, whether it was played on the ten or not.

There are many opportunities to lead a card up to an exposed dummy which is not as good as dummy's best, but which will beat his second-best, such as a nine led up to ace eight and others.

Holding two equals in your partner's suit, the higher should always be returned, regardless of number. Suppose you have lost the king to the ace on the first round and have the jack ten left, with or without others, lead the jack. If your partner has not the queen, this lead will force it out.

Holding the best of your partner's suit, lead it, unless you can use it to better advantage as a reentry for a suit of your own, or something of that kind. It is often vital to give up the best of your partner's suit as soon as possible in no-trumpers.

There are many cases in which it is not advisable to return your partner's lead at all. He may have led from a short or weak suit. He may have started with a trump, which invariably indicates that he has tenaces or guarded honors in the plain suits, and does not wish to lead away from them.

The principal reason for not returning the partner's suit at once is to take advantage of the opportunity to lead up to a weak suit in the dummy, so that your partner may make some inferior

card good for a trick, such as a guarded king, or a queen that is with the ace.

This plan must be followed with caution when playing against no-trumpers, or strong trump declarations, as there is no certainty that your partner can benefit by the lead, and the opportunity for him to go right along with his own suit may be lost, but there are many hands in which the chance must be taken to save game.

Let us suppose your partner has led a queen from Q J 10, dummy on your right, and the declarer wins the trick with the ace, which you know is a false card, as your partner denies the king. You get into the lead two tricks later. You may either return your partner's suit and get that king out of the way, or you may lead up to some weak suit in the dummy, such as three cards to an eight or nine.

This may work in two ways. It may enable your partner to win a trick with a card which he could not have won anything with if he had been forced to lead that suit himself. On the other hand it may force him to give up the only sure trick he had in his hand with which to bring his long suit into play after that king was out of his way. Correct judgment of such situations comes only with experience and practice, much depending on the development of the hand up to that point, and the state of the score. The lead up to weak-

ness in the dummy often places the declarer in a very embarrassing position if he is not well protected in that suit, especially at no-trumps.

When the declarer and dummy sit next each other, there are a number of situations that must be taken advantage of at the first opportunity, or tricks may be lost. The difference between this game and auction lies in the fact that in auction the declarer is never sure of inferior cards while one or other adversary always plays after him or after his dummy. In pirate bridge some combinations are a certainty, but the certainty depends upon the lead coming from the proper hand, and the opponents may forestall this if they are prompt in accepting the opportunity. As this is important, and also peculiar to pirate bridge, it may be well to illustrate it.

	♥ K Q 10 8 6	
	♣ K J 2	
	♦ 8 5 2	
	♠ 9 4	
♥ 2		♥ A J 7 4
♣ 9 6 3		♣ 8 7 5 4
♦ A K 7 3		♦ 10 9 6
♠ A K 10 8 6		♠ 5 3
	N W E S	
	♥ 9 5 3	
	♣ A Q 10	
	♦ Q J 4	
	♠ Q J 7 2	

The bidding on this hand was a pass by S, who dealt, W a spade, accepted by S, and then N bid two hearts, E would not accept, as he had not a trick in his hand outside trumps, and N led the king of hearts, S's cards going down, the accepted spade being the last bid.

The moment E saw the dummy, he put the ace of hearts on his partner's king and led a club. Although dummy put on the ace and exhausted the trumps, killing the jack of clubs later, he could not shut out the king, which won the second round of clubs and saved the little slam.

If E passes the first heart trick, it does not matter what N leads next, the little slam is a certainty for W, as he can get in as often as he likes and make all three of S's clubs by leading through N and E, no matter what clubs each holds, or how they play them.

Incidentally, it may be interesting to call attention for a moment to W's bidding, which is not the best. He should have judged from his extreme weakness in hearts that some one would bid that suit, which would expose him to be made an acceptor on the spades instead of the declarer. It will be seen that had E accepted the hearts, S would have bid the spades. W should have bid the diamonds first and held the spades in reserve. Had E accepted the hearts, and S bid the spades, W might have to refuse.

THE DECLARER'S PLAY

Many of the methods suggested for the play of the opponents can be applied with equally good results by the declarer, especially in such matters as covering second hand, leading high cards instead of small ones in certain situations, etc. But as the declarer has no partner who wishes to be exactly informed on any point, the exact card to lead from any given combination is unimportant. Holding A K Q the declarer may lead whichever he likes, and follow it with whichever suits his fancy.

There is no need for any echoes from his partner, as he can play that hand to suit himself. He need not cover any small card second hand if he sees that dummy can win the trick just as well as he can, unless he wants the lead in a particular hand.

While the position of the dummy may make a great difference in the methods employed by the declarer to secure his contract, there are certain principles that apply equally to all hands. These may be roughly divided into two classes, depend-

ing on whether he is playing with a trump suit or without one.

When there is a declared trump, the first consideration upon gaining the lead will be whether to lead out trumps immediately, or attend to some situation in the plain suits first, or to mix the two, alternating a trump lead with some play in the plain suits. The decision will usually rest upon the possibility of doing one or other of two different things first. These are usually to get rid of losing cards in plain suits, or to make some of the small trumps in the weaker hand before leading trumps.

If neither of these opportunities present themselves, trumps should be led only to protect some suit in which you have winning cards that might be trumped by the opponents. Whether these cards are in the hand of the declarer or his dummy, does not matter, but there is no use leading out trumps if there is nothing that the opponents will have to trump. That is simply getting the trumps out of the way of their strong suits.

ELIMINATION

The first thing for the declarer to do in every hand is to count up the sure tricks between the two hands, his own and dummy's, before he plays a card, and to determine where, if anywhere, there are any tricks to be picked up that are not in sight.

There should be a distinct plan of campaign for every hand, otherwise the play will be nothing but staggering from one suit to the other, hoping to find an opening, squandering all the highest cards in the hand in the first few tricks.

There are very few hands in which the declarer cannot count up just what tricks he must win or lose as soon as he sees the dummy. If there were nothing to play for but the sure tricks in sight, bridge would be a very uninteresting game. There are three ways to get more tricks than appear on the surface. One is by judicious finessing, or leading up to guarded kings or queens in the partner's hand when it is on the right. Another is by making little trumps in one hand before leading big trumps from the other, and by getting rid of small cards, so as to be ready to use small trumps to advantage.

There are two maxims that the beginner should lay to heart. There is no use leading out a suit in which nothing can be accomplished in the way of winning tricks beyond the tricks in sight; and, there is no use trying to run down a big suit while the opponents have any trumps to stop it.

If you hold the A K Q J of a suit between the two hands, those tricks are good any time. Play some other suit and get an extra trick out of it if you can. If you must lead a suit in which you can win every trick, get the trumps out of its way first.

Many beginners make the mistake of starting a play in a plain suit, such as a finesse, before exhausting the adverse trumps, when the finesse could be made just as well, and more safely, after those trumps were drawn. Many tricks are lost by allowing the opponents to regain the lead too early in the development of the hand.

TRUMP PLAY

A common fault with the beginner is being in too great a hurry to lead trumps just because he seems to have plenty of them. There are many hands in which it is highly important to get rid of some small cards in the plain suits first. Take this example:

	♥ A 8 5 3 2	
	♣ 10 7 5	
	♦ 10 7 4	
	♠ K 5	
♥ Q J 7		♥ 10 6
♣ K Q J 6		♣ 9 8 2
♦ 8 6 5 3		♦ A Q J 9 2
♠ 9 6		♠ 10 8 4
	N W E S	
	♥ K 9 4	
	♣ A 4 3	
	♦ K	
	♠ A Q J 7 3 2	

S dealt and bid two spades, accepted by E, no one else making a bid. W led the king of clubs and S won it with the ace. As the dummy is on his right, there is no possible finesse in trumps, because both adversaries play after S, so he led the trumps right out, ace and then queen.

N won the second round, laid down the ace of hearts and then returned his partner's club suit. The two clubs in W's hand saved the game.

S should have been able to count four losing cards in the two hands; a trump, a heart, and two clubs, and his first care should have been to save the only tricks that could be saved by getting rid of those two losing clubs before leading trumps. If he leads the diamond, wins the king with the ace and leads two more rounds, it is impossible for him to fail to go game on the deal. Played in this way, the king of trumps and ace of hearts are the only tricks for W and N.

Before leading trumps from the hand that is short in them, it may be necessary to take a finesse in some plain suit by leading it from that hand. There are many situations in which it looks improbable that the hand will ever be in the lead again, and the question of leading trumps at once, or leading the suit for the finesse must be settled.

Here is a good example of combining the trump lead with an opportunity to make some of the small trumps separately by ruffing:

	♥ 10 9 7	
	♣ Q	
	♦ 8 6 5 4 3	
	♠ J 8 6 4	
♥ —		♥ K 8 6 5 2
♣ A K 7 6 3		♣ J 10 8 4 2
♦ Q 7 2		♦ A 9
♠ A K Q 7 5		♠ 2
	N W E S	
	♥ A Q J 4 3	
	♣ 9 5	
	♦ K J 10	
	♠ 10 9 3	

S dealt and bid a heart, accepted by E. Then W got started on the spade suit, accepted by N, and they carried it to four, over four accepted hearts. In the actual play, W was set for one trick, because when E led the heart and W trumped the first trick, W took it for granted that the clubs would drop, or, if they did not drop, N could ruff them out, so he led two rounds of trumps right out, before touching the clubs. His last trump was forced out by the hearts, after he had made the queen of clubs and led a third trump, because even after N ruffed the fourth club the suit was not established.

An established suit, it should be explained, is one in which the player can win every remaining trick, no matter who leads that suit.

The correct play of the hand would have been to lead a small club on winning the first heart trick with a trump. By coming back with a small trump, W could give N a ruff with a small club, and lead another small trump from that hand. Now he can ruff the third club with the jack, to make sure of the trick, and lead a heart, trumping it with the seven and catching S's last trump with the ace, losing three diamonds after making both ace and king of clubs.

PLAYING NO-TRUMPERS

The chief point about playing no-trumpers is to establish the small cards of a long suit, and bring that suit into the lead after all the higher cards in it are played. The success of this scheme usually depends on the skill of the player in arranging for the reentry cards—the cards in other suits that will bring the dregs of the long suit into play.

If there is no particularly long suit, or if nothing can be accomplished with it, tricks must be looked for in finessing, or by forcing the opponents to lead up to cards that would not otherwise win tricks.

There are one or two simple rules for the beginner to observe in playing no-trumpers. The first relates to the choice of suits to play for.

1. Always play for the suit that is longest between the two hands, counting your own and

the dummy's together. If two suits are equal in number, choose the one that is more unequally divided, such as five in one hand, three in the other, in preference to a suit that is divided four and four.

2. Always lead from the weak hand to the strong. Lead small cards to ace queen and others. Always lead from the hand with nothing but small cards in the suit to the hand that has the king and others; never lead from the king to the hand that has no high card in the suit.

3. Play the high cards from the hand that is shorter in the suit, so as to get out of the way of the small cards in the hand that is long in that suit. With K Q small in one hand, J 10 and three small in the other, for instance, unless you play the king and queen from the hand that is short in the suit, you block your partner, and he may not be able to make the fourth and fifth tricks in that suit.

4. Never assume that an adversary will do anything. Many beginners take it for granted that if they lead a king the adversary will take it with the ace. But he may refuse to do so, in order to block the suit. If you have K J 10 and others in one hand, only the queen in the other, do not imagine that the ace will go right up if you lead the queen, but make sure of forcing out that ace before losing the lead by overtaking the

queen with the king and leading the jack, and perhaps the ten.

REENTRIES

It is highly important that the declarer should plan from the first for reentries. These are the sure winners that will bring an established suit into play. The opportunity to make a reentry is often lost on the very first trick, through undue haste. For example: Dummy is on your right, with a big club suit, lacking only the ace. The only other possible tricks are the king and jack of hearts. You hold ace and one small heart and a heart is led, dummy's jack winning the trick third hand.

Unless you have more than two clubs, the whole club suit in the dummy is dead if you allow that jack of hearts to hold the trick. You must overtake the jack with the ace, so as not to be forced to win the next round of hearts yourself. Then lead the clubs and let dummy continue to lead them until the ace is forced out and the suit established. Now dummy's king of hearts is a sure reentry. This situation comes up in various forms in almost every rubber.

It is often possible to make a reentry out of an inferior card by playing the higher cards from the other hand. For example: You are left with two or three small cards in the dummy that are now

established as sure winners, but the only other cards are the J 9 7 of clubs. If you hold the K 10 8 6 and lead the ten, you can overtake it with the jack if the ace or queen is not played before it gets to the dummy's turn. If the jack does not hold, you can lead the eight next time and overtake it with the nine. Even if that does not hold, the seven must do so next time, when you lead the six.

It is an axiom among good players that four of a suit in each hand, both hands having high cards, can usually make two reentries in the weaker hand. Here is an example of such a situation. Dummy held the K 7 4 3, declarer having the A Q J 6. By leading the queen or jack and winning it with the king, dummy used up one reentry. On getting in again the declarer led out both ace and jack, exhausting the opponents, so that dummy's seven could win the declarer's six, making the second reentry. This situation is very common.

FINESSING

A very fine player once remarked that if there were no finessing in playing bridge he would quit the game. The finesse seems to be even more attractive at auction than the cross-ruff was at whist.

A finesse is any attempt to win a trick with a card which is not the best you hold in that suit, nor in sequence with the best. To play the queen third hand when you hold both ace and queen is to finesse. It is an attempt to win the trick with the inferior card, hoping the king lies on your right.

The opponents of the declarer never finesse, They would be finessing against their own partners. Suppose one holds ace and queen. If the declarer has still to play, and he has the king, the queen would be thrown away. If the king is with the partner of the player who holds ace queen, it does not matter which of the two high cards is played, and it should be the ace or neither.

Finessing against your own partner is one of the most common faults in a beginner. It not only loses tricks, but it discourages the partner from

leading that suit again, as he places the higher card against him.

But the declarer finesses all the time when dummy is opposite him, as at auction. These finesses are of two kinds; those which accomplish all that is expected of them the first time, and those that require two leads from the partner's hands at different times. They may be undertaken when the dummy lies opposite, with an adversary on each side, or when the adversary on the right leads up to his partner on the left through both declarer and dummy hands. If the dummy lies next the declarer there is no finessing, but tenace positions are valuable in the hand on the right.

The lead of a small card to the ace and queen is a good example of a finesse that wins or loses all there is to win on the spot. To lead a small card to the A Q J, or A J 10, is an example of a finesse that must be made twice. If the finesse of the jack holds when made from A Q J, the other hand should be thrown into the lead again, so as to make the second finesse against the king. If the ten played from A J 10 forces out an honor, the other hand must be put into the lead again to give the A J a finesse over the honor that is still to come.

One of the most common mistakes of the beginner, which probably costs more tricks than any

other play, is trying to finesse with the queen in one hand, and the ace in the other. One sees beginners continually leading the queen to the ace, intending to pass it up if it is not covered, under the impression that they are finessing the queen.

But if the second hand has the king it will always be put on, so as to force the declarer to play two honors to win one trick and also to make the jack or ten, or both, good for tricks in the partner's hand. If the king is in the fourth hand, the queen is thrown away by leading it.

The only way to play this situation is to lead from the hand containing the ace to the hand containing the queen. If the king is on the left of the ace, the queen must win a trick. If it is on the right of the ace there is no way to make a trick with the queen unless the player who holds the king is forced to lead that suit himself.

It is only when all four honors, A Q J 10, are held between the two hands that it will pay to lead one of the honors to the hand with the ace, because, if the king is caught, there are two winning cards left at the top of the suit. If it is not caught, there are three.

Leading a jack or ten to an ace is just as useless as the lead of the queen. The student should take a suit of thirteen cards and lay out these various combinations to convince himself that

nothing is to be gained when the second hand covers an honor with an honor, to force two for one.

DUCKING

This must not be confused with finessing, as there is no attempt to win the trick on the first round. The object of ducking a suit is to leave cards of it in both hands. An illustration will make this clear. The hand contains examples of both the finesse and ducking tactics.

	♥ A 9 8 3										
	♣ A K 2										
	♦ 9 6										
	♠ A Q 8 6										
♥ K J 10 7	<table border="1"> <tr><td></td><td>N</td><td></td></tr> <tr><td>W</td><td></td><td>E</td></tr> <tr><td></td><td>S</td><td></td></tr> </table>		N		W		E		S		♥ 5 2
	N										
W		E									
	S										
♣ 9 4 3		♣ Q J 10 8 7									
♦ Q 10		♦ J 5 3									
♠ 10 9 5 2		♠ K J 3									
	♥ Q 6 4										
	♣ 6 5										
	♦ A K 8 7 4 2										
	♠ 7 4										

S dealt and bid a diamond, which no one accepted. W passed and N bid no-trump, which S accepted. E bid two clubs, but N would not accept, so E led the queen of clubs, and N won the trick.

N first leads a small heart to the queen in S's hand, hoping the king is with E, but W wins and returns club nine. This N passes, to exhaust W, who goes on, not knowing whether his partner has led from Q·J 10, or A Q J 10. N wins. S discards a spade.

To make his contract N must get more than two diamond tricks, or must make both ace and queen of spades. To win the game he must make all the diamonds. It is impossible to catch the Q J 10 and two small ones in two leads, no matter how those five cards lie, so N leads a diamond and ducks it when E plays small. W wins with the ten.

It does not matter which suit W leads next, as N will put on the ace of hearts or spades and lead his only remaining diamond. All the diamonds drop in two more rounds, and N makes three by cards and the game, losing a spade or a heart at the end. This would be impossible if the diamond suit is not ducked.

POSTPONED FINESSES

There are many hands in which it is evident to the declarer that he must make a finesse in a certain suit, but this may be postponed until later in the hand, or it may be put off in the suit itself until the second or even the third round, instead of being taken at once.

A common situation when the declarer and his acceptor sit opposite each other is the combination of A K J between the two hands, in various ways of distribution. If all three honors are in the one hand, the finesse of the jack should be postponed until the second round if possible, especially if the suit is long. If the jack is with one of the top cards, it is for the declarer to decide when to take the finesse, if at all, as it can be made only by leading to the jack, either after winning the trick in the other hand or at once.

To lead the jack to the ace and king in the other hand is as useless as leading a queen to an ace, because the second hand will surely cover if that player holds the queen. If the queen is in the fourth hand, the jack is thrown away.

It is a rule with good players not to finesse on the first lead of a suit if the play can be made just as well on the second; and not on the second round if it can be put off until the third. A player does not like to let a singleton queen win a trick when there are both ace and king against it.

It may be well to remind the beginner once more that if the hands of declarer and acceptor lie next each other, there is no finessing of any kind possible. What would be a finesse if the hands were opposite each other becomes a certainty if the stronger hand is on the right; an impossibility if it is on the left unless one adversary leads the suit

through, and only the other adversary is still to play.

In any finessing position it is highly important to keep the lead in the hand that is weaker in the suit. Many persons are too careless about this matter, and get the lead into the wrong hand. Then they have to use a valuable reentry card to get back, and perhaps disclose to the adversaries the command of a suit they were in doubt about.

A common error is playing such combinations as A Q 10 3 in one hand, J 9 2 in the other. The proper lead is the nine, and if the king does not cover second hand, the nine holds. The next lead is the jack, under which the ten must be played if the king is still held up. Now the whole suit makes. But if the jack is led first and the king does not cover, the ten must be played under the jack, or the lead will pass into the other hand. If the ten is played and the king is still twice guarded, it will cover the nine and force the loss of the trey.

This is an example of situations that are continually mismanaged by average players. It is always well to allow for the possibility that an opponent holds four cards of the suit. If the suit is about evenly divided between the two players, it does not matter much how it is managed if you have three winning cards, but there comes up a situation every now and then in which a trick,

and perhaps a very important one, can be saved by correct play, and nothing can be lost. There are other positions in which no play can win anything beyond what is in sight.

All these critical situations arise when the declarer and dummy sit opposite each other. Suppose one hand has the K 10 5 and the other has A Q 9 2. If the jack is only twice guarded, there are four tricks in the suit, without any finessing. If the jack is three times guarded on the left of the A Q 9 2, it cannot be caught, because the third hand is too short in the suit to hold up the king. To finesse the ten on the first round and risk a trick at once, would be foolish.

There is only one way to play so as to make sure of four tricks if the jack is where it can be caught. This is to lead the ace and play the ten on it. Suppose both opponents follow suit. Now lead the deuce and win it with the king. If both sides follow suit, it is all over, but if the second player on this trick drops out, the five can be led to the queen nine, and the jack is caught.

Another position in which it is often necessary to postpone the finesse is when the declarer is trying to make all five cards of a suit. Suppose the cards in one hand are the A 7 4, and in the other the K Q 10 5 2. There are five of the suit against you. If they are divided three and two, there is nothing to play for. If there are five

in one hand, it is impossible to make five tricks, so it all comes down to the question of what to do in case there are four in one hand and one in the other.

If the four cards are to the left of the hand that is longer in the suit, five tricks are impossible. This narrows the problem down to the correct play in case the four cards are to the left of the shorter hand, the A 7 4 in this case.

The play is to reverse the usual rule of high cards from the hand that is shorter in the suit, and to start with the smallest card, the four, winning it with the queen, returning a small card and putting up the ace. If the second hand renounces on this return of the suit, the finesse that has been postponed until the third round will now catch the jack.

DUMMY'S POSITION

When the declarer and his acceptor sit opposite each other, the play is precisely as at auction, and the same tactics apply, the declarer having to take the same chances on finessing, as already explained in this chapter. But when the declarer and his acceptor sit next each other there is a wide field for the exercise of skill in arranging for the required number of opportunities to lead through both adversaries, so as to take advantage of tenaces and guarded honors.

The first thing that will impress itself upon the attention of a person who is accustomed to auction will be the restriction of finessing to those suits which are led through both hands by the adversary on the right, up to his partner on the left, and the importance of preventing such a lead when the declarer is not well protected in such a suit. It is just like preventing a lead through a once-guarded king in the older game.

The usual rules for second-hand play will also apply only to those situations in which one of the adversaries leads through both hands. The combinations from which such a lead should be covered will then be governed by the same rules as if declarer and dummy sat opposite each other.

LAWS

All the regulations for minor offenses in bidding and play will be found fully dealt with in the official laws of the game, which follow. These laws are naturally founded upon those of Auction Bridge except in matters that require a consideration of the individual character of the play, and that partners are not responsible for each other's errors until the final bid is made and accepted.

THE LAWS OF PIRATE BRIDGE

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FORMING TABLES

1. Those first in the room shall have the right to play the first rubber, candidates of equal standing deciding their order by cutting. If a player exposes more than one card, the highest is his cut. A table is complete with six players, four of whom are active in each rubber.

2. Players wishing to enter an incomplete table must signify their intention before the cards are cut for the next rubber. Those who have played the greatest number of consecutive rubbers retire. Equalities are decided by cutting, the highest going out.

3. In making up new tables, those who have not played at other tables have the prior right. If a player who is cut out of another table helps to make up a new table that cannot be formed without him, he shall be the last to cut out at the new table and may retain his position at the

first table by announcing his return to it as soon as his position can be filled at the new table; but any player leaving one table to enter another that can be formed without him, loses his right at the first table.

4. Any player who is compelled to leave a table during a rubber may appoint a substitute, but such appointment ends with the rubber and does not affect the substitute's rights for entry into the next rubber. Should one player break up a table, the others have the prior right of entry elsewhere.

CUTTING AND DEALING

5. The four active players draw from a spread pack for the first deal and choice of seats and cards. Low wins. The lowest having made his selection the others sit in order to his left, according to the rank of their cards. All draw from the same pack, and the four cards at each end must not be drawn.

6. In drawing the ace is low. If cards of equal value are drawn, the spade shall have the preference, hearts next, then diamonds. In drawing for seats, if a player exposes more than one card he must draw again.

7. After the first deal, the player sitting opposite the dealer shall collect the cards of the still pack for the next deal, shuffle them, and place

them on his right. When this pack is brought into play, any one at the table has the right to shuffle it, the dealer last. The deal passes to the left. If new cards are called for at any time, two packs must be provided and the next dealer takes his choice.

8. The dealer must present the pack to the player on his right to be cut and at least four cards must be left in each packet. If any card is exposed, or the place of cutting is uncertain, the dealer must reshuffle and present the pack again. Should the dealer reshuffle after a proper cut, any other player may demand a shuffle.

9. The cards shall be dealt from left to right, one at a time, and the deal is complete when the last card falls in its proper place to the dealer.

10. No matter what irregularities occur, the deal is not lost. There must be a new deal if it is made with the wrong cards; if the pack has not been properly cut; if any card is found faced in the pack; if each player does not receive the right number of cards, one at a time; or if the pack is proved incorrect or imperfect by reason of missing or superfluous cards, or cards so marked or torn that they may be recognized by the back.

11. A player dealing out of turn, or with the wrong pack, must be stopped before the last card is dealt, or the deal stands, and the protest must be made by a player who has not lifted or looked

at any of his cards. When a deal out of turn stands, the next deal passes to the left; but if it was made with the wrong cards, the next dealer may take his choice.

12. Any player who lifts and looks at any of his cards before the deal is complete shall forfeit 25 points in honors to each of the others for each card so looked at.

13. If the pack is proved to be imperfect before the cards are cut for the following deal, or the score of the rubber made up and agreed to, the deal with the imperfect pack is void, but all previous scores or cutting made with that pack shall stand.

14. If any player have less than thirteen cards, the others having their right number, that card must be found if the deal was apparently regular, or he will be responsible for any revokes, just as if the card had been in his hand. If two players have a wrong number, the fifty-two cards being in evidence, the deal is void.

THE DECLARATIONS

15. The dealer, after examining his hand, may name any suit, or no-trump, declaring to win any number of tricks from one to seven over his book. [The declarer's book is the first six tricks he wins. His opponents' book is the difference between the contract and seven.] If the

dealer passes, each player to the left in turn may then bid or pass.

16. If any player makes a bid, each in turn to the left may accept him as a partner or pass, the phrase being, "I accept," or, "I accept two hearts," or "I pass."

17. There shall be no further bidding and no doubling until the bidder has been accepted. Any player making a bid out of turn or before the previous bid has been accepted, shall forfeit his right to bid until the current bid has been accepted (or becomes void) and another bid is made by some other player; but he may accept this new bid.

18. If no one will accept the first bid made, it is void, and the player to the left of the bidder may declare himself; but no player whose bid has not been accepted can bid again until some other player's bid is accepted, but he may be the acceptor of another's bid. If no one can make a bid of any sort, or if none of the bids made is accepted, the deal is void and passes to the left.

19. As soon as a bid is accepted, any player in turn to the left, including the bidder who has just been accepted, may bid higher or pass. If he is not the bidder or acceptor, he may double. An acceptor cannot overcall his own acceptance if no accepted bid or double has intervened.

20. An equal number of tricks in diamonds

will outbid clubs; hearts outrank diamonds, and spades outrank hearts; no-trumps outrank any suit. A larger number of tricks in any suit will outrank a smaller number in anything; so that four clubs is better than three no-trumps.

21. After a bid is made and accepted, if any higher bid is made and not accepted, that bid is void and the bid returns to the last acceptance. The player whose bid is not accepted cannot bid again unless some player to his left can make an acceptable bid. If no such bid is made and accepted, the bidding is closed, the last acceptance becoming the winning declaration. A player who has passed an acceptance cannot reenter the bidding if the only bid after his acceptance is declared void.

22. A slip of the tongue may be corrected before the next player declares himself, such as two hearts, when two spades was meant, but the size of the bid may not be changed, and a pass, double, or acceptance cannot be recalled. An insufficient declaration must be made sufficient provided attention is called to it before the next player declares himself, otherwise it stands, and may be accepted.

23. Any player may be informed as to what the previous bids have been, and who accepted them, but after the final bid has been accepted and the first card led, any such information shall

be given under a penalty of 50 points in honors, to be scored by each of the other players.

DOUBLING

24. No player may double his own or his partner's bid, nor redouble his partner's double or redouble an opponent's redouble, under penalty of 25 points for a double, or 50 for a redouble, scored by each of the others.

25. When a bid has been accepted, either of the opponents, in his proper turn, may double, and then either the bidder or his acceptor in his proper turn may redouble, but that ends it. The penalty for doubling out of turn is the same as for a bid out of turn. [See Law 17.]

26. A double reopens the bidding, as it cannot be accepted. Doubling does not affect the rank of the bids, so that three hearts doubled, or even redoubled, may still be overcalled with three spades.

27. When a doubled or redoubled declaration is played, the value of the tricks and revoke penalty is doubled or redoubled, but not the honors, nor slams.

THE PLAY

28. No matter what the previous bids have been, nor by whom made, the player who makes

the final accepted bid becomes the declarer and plays the combined hands, his acceptor becoming the dummy, without changing his position at the table.

29. The player to the left of the declarer leads for the first trick, unless that person happens to be dummy, in which case the player to his left leads. As soon as the first card is led, the acceptor's cards are laid down, sorted into suits and face up, and they may be immediately to the right or left of the declarer, or opposite him, according to the position occupied by the acceptor.

30. If the wrong player leads for the first trick, not being dummy, the declarer may either accept the lead or prevent the rightful leader from leading that suit; or he may call the erroneous lead an exposed card.

31. Each player in turn to the left must follow suit if he can, or he is responsible for a revoke. Having none of the suit led, he may trump or discard at pleasure.

ERRORS IN PLAY

32. If either adversary of the declarer leads when it is his partner's turn, the declarer may call the card exposed and demand it be left on the table subject to call; or he may call a suit from the proper leader, in which case the card led in

error shall be taken up. If either declarer or dummy play to the incorrect lead, it stands without penalty. If both adversaries lead at the same instant, the correct lead stands; the other is an exposed card.

33. If it is the turn of neither opponent to lead, when one of them does so, a suit may be called as soon as either regains the lead, the card led in error being left on the table as a marker until the declarer decides whether to call that card or call a suit, but he cannot do both.

34. If the declarer leads out of turn, either from his own hand or dummy, he cannot correct the error unless directed to do so by an adversary. If either adversary plays to the lead without correcting it, it stands.

35. If a player who is called upon to lead a suit have none of it, no other suit can be called, and he may lead as he pleases.

36. Should one adversary play to a trick when it is his partner's turn, the one who has not played may be called upon for his highest or lowest card of the suit, or to win or not to win the trick. If he has none of the suit led, he may be called upon to discard his highest card in any suit the declarer names. If he has none of that suit either, the penalty is paid. If the declarer plays from both hands without waiting for the opponent between, either of them may play first.

37. If any one but dummy fails to play to a trick and it is not corrected before the same player has played to the next trick, the side not in error may demand a new deal. If the deal is allowed to stand, the superfluous card at the end belongs to the imperfect trick, but is not a revoke.

38. If two or more cards are played to the same trick by any one except dummy, and the mistake is not discovered and corrected before playing to the next trick, the player in error is responsible for revokes, just as if he still held one of those cards in hand, and the adversaries have the option of a new deal. If he announces the shortage before the deal is played out, he may search the tricks and turn up the one containing five cards, restoring his own card to his hand to save any further revokes. Either of the partners not in error may decide, without consultation, which card shall be withdrawn, but the trick remains as won.

39. Any player looking at a trick that has been properly turned down and quitted by the rightful winners, except under Law 38, shall forfeit 25 points in honors to each of the others.

40. If either adversary calls attention to a trick before his partner plays, by saying it is his, or indicating his card, the declarer may call upon the partner to play his highest or lowest of the suit, or to win or lose the trick. Any player may

ask the cards to be placed before those who played them.

41. Either adversary may prevent his partner from leading out of turn, but should he call attention to any incident of the play the declarer may call a suit from the one whose next turn it will be to lead.

42. If an adversary name a card in his own or his partner's hand, or make any remark that would locate a card or cards in any hand but dummy's, such cards shall be placed on the table as exposed if held by the adversaries. If held by the declarer, he may call a suit.

EXPOSED CARDS

43. If any player exposes a card after the deal and before the end of the bidding, each of the others shall score 25 in honors. Should the player in error eventually prove to be an opponent of the declarer's but not the leader for the first trick, the declarer may prevent the initial lead of the exposed suit. If the player in error becomes the declarer or his acceptor, there is no penalty.

44. If a card is exposed after the winning declaration has been settled, and before play begins, the declarer may call it exposed and subject to call, or he may call a suit if it is the partner's turn

to lead for the first trick. The declarer may expose any or all his own cards without penalty.

45. If, during the play, a card is dropped face upward on the table by an adversary, even if no one can name it, or if it is so held that the partner can see any portion of its face, it is an exposed card and subject to call by the declarer. If two or more cards are played to the same trick, the declarer may choose which shall be played; the others are exposed.

46. Cards dropped on the floor or below the table are not exposed cards; neither are cards shown to the declarer or dummy, but not to the partner.

47. A card detached from the hand of the declarer is not played until it is placed face upward on the table and the fingers removed from it.

48. If an adversary expose his last card before his partner has played to the twelfth trick, both cards in the partner's hand shall be placed on the table and subject to call.

49. If one adversary continue to lead cards one after another that neither declarer nor dummy can win, without waiting for the partner to play, the partner may be called upon to win, if he can, any one of those tricks. If the partner can win such a trick, the other premature leads become exposed cards.

50. If an adversary abandons his hand, all

the cards in it become exposed, but the partner may hold his. If the declarer at any time claims the rest of the tricks, or names the number he will win, his cards must be placed face upward on the table and played without any finesse not absolutely proved to be a winner. Any cards exposed by his adversaries in consequence of his assertion cannot be called. Tricks conceded in error by either side must stand.

51. The call for an exposed card may be repeated by the declarer until it can be played, but no one can be compelled to play a card that would cause him to revoke.

THE REVOKE

52. Each player in turn must follow suit if he can, or it is a revoke. If dummy revokes, there is no penalty. A revoke is established as soon as the trick in which it occurs is turned and quitted by the rightful winners, or when the player in error, or his partner, whether in his right turn or not, leads or plays to the following trick. Any refusal to comply with a performable penalty is also a revoke.

53. The penalty for a revoke, when claimed and proved, shall be 50 points in the honor column, to be scored by each of the three who are not in error. But if the partner of the one who revokes

has failed to ask him if he had none of the suit to which he renounced, the partner must pay the 50 in honors to each of the three others, the player actually in error paying nothing. Neither declarer nor acceptor can be penalized for any revokes made by the dummy, as those cards are exposed.

54. If the contract has been doubled or redoubled, the revoke penalty is also doubled or redoubled.

55. Before the trick is turned and quitted any player may ask the revoker if he has none of the suit to which he renounces. Subsequent turning and quitting does not establish the revoke unless the question is answered in the negative, or the player in error leads or plays to the following trick.

56. Should dummy leave the table during the play, he may ask the courtesy of the table to protect him from revokes by the declarer during his absence.

57. If a revoke is corrected in time, the players who have followed may withdraw their cards and substitute others without penalty. When a revoke by an adversary is corrected, the declarer may either call the card played in error exposed, or he may ask for the highest or lowest of the suit to be played to the current trick.

58. If the declarer corrects his revoke there is no penalty unless both adversaries have played to

the trick and the declarer is not the last player. If dummy is still to play, the opponents may call upon the declarer for his highest or lowest of the suit when he corrects his revoke.

59. Revokes must be claimed and proved before the cards are cut for the following deal or rubber, or before the final score of the rubber is made up and agreed to.

60. If more than one revoke is made by the same partners, the penalty is 50 for each, but if both sides revoke, the one oftener than the other, the difference only is scored.

DUMMY

61. As soon as the first card is led by the proper player the acceptor's cards are placed face upward on the table in front of him, sorted into suits, trumps to the right, if any, and the declarer then plays all cards from that hand.

62. Until his hand is laid down, the acceptor has all the rights of any other player and may call attention to a lead from the wrong hand, exposed cards, etc., but after his cards are laid down he takes no part in the play except as follows:

- (a) He may call attention to too many or too few cards in a trick, or to a trick taken by the wrong side.

- (b) He may ask any player if he has none of the suit led.
- (c) He may correct an improper demand for a penalty.
- (d) He may take part in any dispute which he did not himself begin.
- (e) He may call attention to an adverse revoke after it is established, or to exposed cards or leads out of turn; but only on condition that he has not deliberately overlooked the hand of either adversary.
- (f) He may also remind the declarer of any rights he may have under the laws, or insist that a hand be played out, instead of conceding tricks.

63. If dummy call attention to any other incident of the play for which the declarer might have exacted a penalty, the penalty cannot be demanded.

64. If dummy suggests the play of any card, as by touching one of his own or naming one of the declarer's, either adversary may demand that such card shall or shall not be played to the current trick.

65. If dummy tries to prevent the declarer from leading from the wrong hand, either adversary may insist that the lead shall come from that hand.

66. Should the declarer name or touch any card in the dummy without first announcing that he is arranging the hand, that card must be played. If he touches more than one, he may play either.

67. In all cases in which declarer or dummy is liable to a penalty, either adversary may demand it, or direct his partner to do so, but they may not consult, nor even ask which of them shall enforce it.

SCORING

68. An individual score shall be kept for each of the four players. All tricks over the declarer's book count toward his contract. When this is fulfilled, he scores for each trick over his book, 6 points if clubs are trumps; 7 if diamonds; 8 if hearts; 9 if spades, and 10 if no-trumps. These values may be doubled or redoubled.

69. When the declarer reaches or passes 30 points, made by tricks alone, he wins a game, draws a line under it and adds 50 points in the honor column. Every hand is played out, and all tricks over the contract or beyond the game are scored.

70. Only the individual declarer can score below the line toward game, but the total value of all the points he wins, except the final 50 for the rubber, are credited to his acceptor in the honor column.

71. The first player to win two games wins the rubber, for which he receives 50 points in addition to the regular 50 for winning a game; but this additional 50 is not credited to his acceptor.

72. If the partners win thirteen tricks they each score 100 for grand slam. If they win twelve, they score 50 for little slam, whether they are the declarers or not. These values are not affected by doubling. If the declaration is seven and only six by cards is made, the little slam is still scored.

73. The honors are the ace, king, queen, jack, ten, of the trump suit, or the four aces at no-trump. Three honors between partners are equal in value to two tricks in that suit, such as 12 points if clubs are trumps. Four honors between partners are worth four tricks; five are worth five tricks. Four or five in one hand are worth double. Four in one hand, fifth in the partner's, are worth nine tricks, such as 81 if spades were trumps. All honors are scored above the line and are not affected by doubling. Honors are credited to the original holders.

74. Three aces at no-trump are worth 30; four aces between partners, 40; four in one hand 100.

75. If the declarer fulfils his contract after being doubled he adds a bonus of 50 points in honors, and 50 more for each trick over his contract, if any. This bonus is increased to 100 if the contract was redoubled.

76. If the contract fails, the adversaries score nothing toward game, but they take 50 points in honors for each trick over their book—that is, for each undertrick of the declarer's. This will be 100 if they have doubled; 200 if redoubled.

77. In case of revokes, the penalty is 50 points for each, 100 if doubled, 200 if redoubled, for either side.

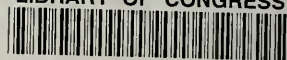
78. Any error in the honor score must be claimed and proved before the score for the rubber is made up and agreed upon. An error in the trick score must be corrected before the first bid is made on the following deal; or, if there is no such deal, before the rubber score is agreed to.

79. At the end of the rubber, all the scores are added and each player pays to or receives from each of the others the difference between his total and theirs.

80. If the play is started with the understanding that it shall stop at a certain hour, and the current rubber is not finished at that time, there shall be no further dealing, and the score shall be made up as it stands. If there has been no such understanding and one of the players leaves the game without providing a substitute, his opponents may make up the score as it stands or cancel it entirely for the current rubber.



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